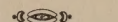
BIBLE LANDMARKS *in a* CHANGING LAND

J. MacPHAIL WAGGETT

Library of The Theological Seminary

PRINCETON · NEW JERSEY



PRESENTED BY
The Estate of
Victor H. Lukens

DS107
.3.W13

V. H. Lukens
#61.04

Bible Landmarks in a Changing Land

LIBRARY OF PRINC
MAR 23 195
THEOLOGICAL SEM

By
J. MacPHAIL WAGGETT, Ph.D., D.D.
Pastor, Mount Zion Presbyterian Church, (South)
St. Charles, S. C.

Introduction by
PROF. ERNEST TRICE THOMPSON
Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va.

NEW YORK — CHICAGO
Fleming H. Revell Company
LONDON AND EDINBURGH

Copyright, MCMXXX, by
FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 851 Cass Street
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 99 George Street

INTRODUCTION

NO land has had a more fascinating history than Palestine. When the veil that conceals the early story of the human race began to lift, the country was held in turn by the great civilizations of the Euphrates and the Nile. It was desired, and overrun, by Amorites, by Hittites and by Khabiri, these last a part of the great Aramean movement to which the Israelites also belonged. After 1350 B. C., Egyptian control gave way to a number of petty tribes. About this time Philistines and Israelites began a contest for the land, ending in a victory for the Israelites. In 722 B. C. came the Assyrians, and in 586 B. C. the Babylonians, and the Israelites were scattered throughout the East. In 536 B. C., a small remnant returned, remaining subject in turn to Persia, to Macedonia, to Egypt, and to Syria. A brief period of independence followed under the Maccabees. In 63 B. C. the Romans captured Jerusalem, dominating the land until the disintegration of their Empire. Here in A. D. 29 a Young Carpenter from Nazareth was crucified, and there went out that great religion which in three centuries conquered the Roman world and since then has encompassed the earth. In A. D. 614 Roman dominion yielded to the Persian king, Khristu II. In A. D. 625 the country came into the possession of the Mohammedans. From 1099 to 1187, as a result of the

Crusades, the land was again in Christian hands. But in 1516 there began the desolating sovereignty of the Ottoman Turks, which continued until the British mandate of Palestine which followed the World War.

To-day Palestine is a Holy Land to a large part of the human race. It contains shrines which the Mohammedans hold in sanctity second only to that of Mecca. It is the ancestral home of the Jews. It was here that the Son of Man lived and died. Year after year, generation after generation, pilgrims come and go, myriads count it as the hope of a lifetime to walk the paths which their Saviour trod. Others know its towns and mountains and waters better than those of their own land. All these will find delight in the book which lies before them. Those who have been to Palestine will find it a most interesting memento of their trip, deepening its initial impressions, conserving its sacred memories; those who plan to go will find it almost invaluable, containing so much in short compass that they will wish to have in hand. Those who cannot go themselves will find that the author, in entrancing style, brings Palestine to them, the new Palestine as well as the old, and as they read, the stories of the Bible will live again before them.

ERNEST TRICE THOMPSON.
Professor of Church History,
Union Theological Seminary,
Richmond, Va.

CONTENTS

I.	Permanence and Change in Palestine	9
II.	From Jerusalem Southward	14
III.	From Jerusalem to Jericho	31
IV.	From Jerusalem Northward	44
V.	Samaria	56
VI.	Esdraelon	62
VII.	Area Surrounding Esdraelon	70
VIII.	Galilee	77
IX.	From Carmel to Jaffa and Jerusalem	87
X.	The Holy City	102
	Index	129

I

PERMANENCE AND CHANGE IN PALESTINE

ANYONE visiting Palestine as a sightseer or student should possess two particular mental attributes—the one an imagination able to recreate something of the past history of the land, the other a power to appreciate that which is new, in so far as this may express a state of material or spiritual progress. Since the dramatic Bible times with their flourishing activities and far-reaching influences, the country has undergone so many transformations, that it is difficult to recognize, at once, its obscured glory and significant associations.

Northern Palestine, the land of our Saviour's youth, resembles its past in little more than its physical features. When the division of this territory was made by Joshua to the tribes of Asher, Naphtali, Zebulun, and Issachar, there were, according to Josephus, sixty cities in Galilee mentioned by name, and altogether two hundred and four cities and villages. Josephus mentions the names of forty of the cities, and says that nineteen were fortified. At the time of Jesus the province, with two thousand square miles, contained a popu-

lation of three million people. The lake was dotted with boats scudding before the wind, moving slowly with labouring oars, or resting in the calm with drooping sails. The white line of the shore was set with bright little towns like a string of pearls encased between the edge of a burnished mirror and its brown framework of hills. Hamlets clustered on the terraced slopes, and villages of white stone crowned the heights. The streets and highways were alive with a dense population. Merchants, caravans, scholars, labourers, devotees and pilgrims—motley crowds moving in pageant-like procession, were continually crossing and recrossing the land, each bent on some particular mission, and each thinking his business to be the one of chief importance.

Since that eventful period the great centres of civilization have moved about. Of necessity, the near-lying colonies have changed with them. Northern Palestine has not been allowed to escape such consequences. It has ceased to be a bridge between two great worlds. Added to this, Turkish oppression hanging like a pall over the land, did for it what no mere shifting of commerce could have effected. No blight poisoned the air or destroyed the soil, but a degrading despotism dried up the sources of social prosperity as completely as if some elementary convulsion had suddenly turned the clime of beauty cold and dark, and struck the teeming earth with pathetic barrenness.

In like manner has disappeared much of the

ancient glamour of the Southland; cities of elaborate and costly architecture lie in ruins, and much that is unpleasant meets the eye in the towns that remain. As you traverse the highlands about Jerusalem, you look on hills that seem, as one writer puts it, to have been stoned to death. If you cast your eyes eastward toward Jericho, the vision scans an arid waste—a weird desolation that makes you wonder why men ever had thought to make it a public highway. The Wilderness of Judæa contained in the days of Joshua "six cities with their villages." Where five of these cities lay we cannot even guess; En-Gedi alone is known.

But these things notwithstanding, to those who have a love for historical research, and who are given to pondering over the story of the race and its upward climb, this narrow sea-border is a magnificent land. The men who once walked here were characters whose thoughts have moulded ours; the history created within these boundaries is one that has touched the life of the world; and to revive within our minds the various scenes of this territory with their associated characters and events, is to review the rise and development of some of the most potent elements of civilization.

Nor is its past significance the only fascination of the Holy Land. To-day, along Palestine's hillsides and plains, is appearing a new order of things which promises to be a realization of a long-cherished hope, an industrial and social renaissance presaging the fulfillment of a great national

faith. Benjamin Disraeli once wrote: "A race that persists in celebrating their vintages, although they have no fruits to gather, will regain their vineyards." For more than a thousand years generations of men who never saw this land prayed for its rain in due season, blessed its fruits and kept its harvest festivals. They felt that this faith, unique in the annals of history, kept from father to son, would be eventually justified. To-day, out of the darkness of the long night, we see betokenings of dawn. Its traditional people are turning to Palestine with a manifest zeal for the home of their fathers. Waste lands are being reclaimed, habitations are being constructed, and along the same road with the camel's ungainly stride, high-powered motor vehicles transport the country's products. Although there is not the charm of antiquity about a modern age giving new machinery to the soil and concrete sidewalks to the street, there is the thrill of seeing in these introductions an accomplishment in our very day of the prophecy of Amos: " They shall build the waste cities and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards and drink the wine thereof; they shall make gardens and eat the fruits thereof."

Yet supremely, Palestine owes its attraction for us to its elements that do not change. There are still, in spite of deprivation and innovation, the hills upon which the Saviour sat, the valleys through which prophets dragged their weary limbs, the roads that bore the print of the apostles' feet.

There is Bethlehem and Nazareth and Jerusalem and many other places, all endeared to the world because of their hallowed memories, to be revered and blessed by mankind to the end of time.

It has been said that the tourist approaching the Holy City for the first time exclaims in his ecstasy, "*This* is Jerusalem!" Then when he is well within the city his disappointed words are, "Is *this* Jerusalem?" But such a one does not wait long for another emotion. It is an appreciation that fills the mind as intimacy with the environment grows, as ancient landmarks tell one by one their story, as the pageant of an unparalleled past moves in imagination before him. Then he feels something of how men were stirred to deeds of valour, of how shepherds and fishermen were inspired, of how prophets moved abreast of their time, and of how there went out from here that vast and fertile religion, which has made its way throughout the universe, filling every expanse of human wisdom, bathing in its inexhaustible waves the past, the present and the future, and constituting a miracle of conquest, compared with which the victories of Cæsar and Alexander were as trifles, the founding of Rome and Athens, as nought.

II

FROM JERUSALEM SOUTHWARD

SOUTHWARD from Jerusalem, on the ancient highway to Egypt, are two of the most renowned of all Bible landmarks—Bethlehem, the birthplace of the world's Saviour and the City of David; Hebron, the home and last resting-place of the great patriarch to whom the Lord had said: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee, and I will make of thee a great nation, and will bless thee and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing."

These cities lie in a region of undulating hills and valleys, each one connected more or less with some event of sacred history. One hill on the west is Gibeah of Judah, from whose rocky elevation the wild mountaineers looked down upon the field of Ephesdammin when Israel and the Philistines put the battle in array army against army, and the shepherd boy of Bethlehem slew the giant warrior of Gath. Another mark close by is Beit-Jaia, once Gallim, the native home of Phalti, the man who married Saul's daughter after she was separated from her husband David. On the east is Frank Mountain, for ten centuries a watch-tower and rallying place for the hosts of Israel. South of this

PALESTINE
IN THE
TIME OF CHRIST
0 5 10 20 30 40
SCALE OF MILES
35°
36°
33°
32°
31°
Sidon
Zarephath
Tyre
Ladder of Tyre
Damascus
PHENICIA
Lebanon
R. Leontes
ITUREA
Anti-Lebanon
Mt. Hermon
PANIAS
Dan
Cæsarea Philippi
ITUREA
TRACHONITIS
UPPER GALILEE
TETRARCHY
Waters of Merom (L. Huleh)
Seleucia
Ramah
Safed
Bethsaida Julias
Chorazin
Capernaum
Ptolemais
Bay of Acre
GALILEE
Sea of Galilee
Cerasa
Magdala
Kurn Hattin
Gamala
Ashtaroth
BATANÆA
Cana
Tiberias
Hippos
Bethlehem
Mt. Tabor
Yarmuk
AURANITIS
Nazareth
LOWER GALILEE
Abila
R. Gadara
Kanata
Esdraelon
R. Kishon
Nain
Megiddo
Edrei
Jezreel
Scythopolis (Bethshan)
Bethabara
Cæsarea
Mt. Gilboa
DECAPOLIS
Salim(?)
Pella
Dium
Aenon(?)
SAMARIA
Samaria
Mt. Ebal
Gerasa
Apollonia
Shechem
Sychar
Jacob's Well
Jordan
R. Jabbok
Joppa
Antipatris
Phasaelis
Arimathea
Archelais(?)
Thamna
Gophna
Lydda
Ephraim
Philadelphia
Bethel
Jamnia
Ekron
Emmaus
Jericho
Emmaus(?)
Mt. of Olives
Livias
Julias
Heshbon
Ashdod
Azotus
Jerusalem
Bethany
Nebo
Bethlehem
Herodium
Ashkelon
JUDEA
Eleutheropolis
Gallirhoe
Machaerus
Gaza
Bethzur
Hebron
Dibon
Arnon
Masada
Beersheba
Wilderness of Judea
DEAD SEA (ALTSEA)
MOAB
IDUMEA
Rehoboth
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Plain of Sharon
Plain of Esdraelon
Mt. Carmel
PHILISTIA
PROVINCE
PEREA
GILEAD
HERODIAN TETRARCHY
PHILIP
C.S.H. & CO., N.Y.
Longitude East from Greenwich

is Tekua, once Tekoa, where lived Amos, one of the country's moral watchmen, guarding with an enthusiastic zeal the integrity of the land. On every hand amid the bleakness strikingly peculiar to this region, rise associations and memories of a great race, of a great religion, of colossal characters whose souls were touched by God, whose minds were taught by His spirit and the transcriptions of His created world. Here in these solemn spaces of the open, they heard the magic of the still small voice; they sensed the eternity of sea and of wilderness; they heard the thunder shouts, and trembled at the depths of the mountain caverns; they saw the gathering of the mists in the valleys and their dispersion at a breath. Here they drew these elements into their being, from whence they came forth in inspiring speech and prophecy.

In Bethlehem, the one place that endears the town to all Christendom, is a crypt over which is built a plain-fronted edifice, the Church of the Nativity. To this crypt came the Wise Men centuries ago, bearing frankincense and myrrh. To this place are drawn to-day a heterogeneous stream of pilgrims who crowd the little subterranean cavern, pressing their lips against a silver star upon the floor, bedewing it with their tears and offering prayer and praise. For in this cave the Christ-Child was born. Here, where silver lamps burn with a dim light, eternity became habitant of the tabernacle of time, and the world beheld the Divine in human form.

The original church on this ground, parts of which still remain, was built by the Empress Helena, to keep guard over this, the most treasured of all Christian shrines. St. Jerome, a great scholar of the fourth century, lies buried within the Church of the Nativity. He came here so that in the atmosphere of the consecrated cave, he might the better translate the Holy Scriptures from Hebrew and Greek into Latin, never remitting his labours until his fragile form sank beneath the task.

Bethlehem has a population of about four thousand. Added to pastoral pursuits, a brisk trade is carried on by its people in trinkets and souvenirs. The streets are clean, and the inhabitants have the reputation of being the most orderly and industrious of the country's older settlements. The religious sentiment is prevailingly Christian, a pleasant thing to find in a land where the Crescent so generally outvies the Cross. Whatever changes may be effected in the town, it is clear, after nineteen hundred years, that Bethlehem will never lose its significance as a Bible landmark. Of that renowned domain whose proud emperor summoned Mary to perform a journey of eighty miles, not a vestige remains in the land; of the Herods who sought the young King's life and persecuted His manhood, not a descendant reigns on the broad earth; but here at Bethlehem we can witness that Christ holds sway over a countless multitude of souls; that in the world's two hemi-

spheres there exists an ever-increasing host of people who regard the associations of this place as life's richest gift.

Hebron lies twenty miles from Jerusalem. Two things testify to the site of the town as a Bible landmark. The first of these is the city's pool. A wall may crumble, a temple may be thrown down, a palace may be destroyed by fire, but a well cut in the living rock endures forever. The second witness is the cave long revered as the burial place of the patriarch of Ur and his family. The setting of this natural phenomenon, together with the traditions of the place and the presence of masonry of the pyramid age are enough to satisfy us that here is the Westminster Abbey of the Holy Land; that this silent cavern is the cave of Machpelah, bought by Abraham for " four hundred shekels of silver . . . made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a buryingplace by the sons of Heth " (Gen. 23: 20). Here is the place where Abraham came to bury Sarah, and to weep for her; where Isaac and Rebekah found their eternal resting-place; where Leah was left, and where one of the most remarkable cortèges in history came, when all the servants of Pharaoh and the elders of his house, and all the elders of Egypt, accompanied Joseph and his brethren, taking with them their families and flocks and herds, escorting the weary bones of Jacob to place him by the side of the wife who had deceived him.

Innumerable historic pageants have crowded the

stage of Hebron. From this ancient city of Mamre, Abraham launched forth at the head of three hundred and eighteen servants, born in his house, to overtake and defeat the kings who had taken captive his brother's son. From here Hagar fled to the wilderness, because life had grown intolerable in her home. Hither Joshua marched as conqueror, to create a city of refuge and of a priesthood. Here David was crowned king, making this his capital for seven and a half years. Between the gates of Hebron Joab killed Abner when " he took him aside in the gate to speak with him quietly, and smote him there under the fifth rib that he died." In this abandoned capital Absalom organized his conspiracy against his father, and David's grandson Rehoboam added to the habitation the elements of a fortress.

For seven hundred years after its construction, no Christian was allowed to enter the mosque at Hebron which guards the cenotaphs of the patriarchs. The first person to break the iron rule was the Prince of Wales. In the year 1862, after much skillful diplomacy, he succeeded in gaining admittance for himself and his tutor, Dean Stanley.

Since the British occupation of Palestine this regulation has been changed. The non-Moslem tourist may now visit the mosque upon presenting a letter from the Grand Mufti at Jerusalem; and what is more surprising, on March 25, 1928, the long-guarded cave of Machpelah was declared open to such as should supplement their request with the

sum of one dollar and twenty-five cents. The Moslem Supreme Council, having noted that the Mosque of Omar was collecting thirty thousand dollars annually from visitors, decided to further replenish their coffers with Christian money by commercializing the location of the ancient sepulchres.

A photograph of the tomb of Abraham was given to the world in 1924, when a group of workmen from the American colony were employed to install an electric plant within the mosque. The sarcophagus of the great patriarch is similar to those built for the sultans and pashas, and covered with velvet and silver tracings from the Koran. The tomb of Sarah, guarded by gates, is in a recess at the right; those of Jacob and Leah in a like recess on the opposite side. For some unknown reason the graves of Isaac and Rebekah are regarded as not to be approached. The Arabs explain the circumstance by telling you that "Isaac was proverbially jealous, and it is dangerous to exasperate him." Excepting Mecca, this haram is, to the Mohammedan, the most sacred place in the world.

An oak growing within an enclosure outside the city carries the title of "Abraham's Oak." Beneath the shade of this tree, we are told, the "Friend of God" received the angel ambassadors. It is evident that the plant has outlived many human generations, but the veneration of the Mussulmans for this gnarled and withered form is, as

in many instances, a little extravagant for the limited imagination of the Western mind.

Hebron, with its twenty thousand people, has not been greatly disturbed by the innovations of modern social life. There are some signs of progress such as the presence of the Jewish college, Knesseth Israel, transferred in 1924 from Slobodka, after a fifty years' work there. Nearly three hundred graduates have been sent out from this school during its five years in Abraham's city. Other cultural and sociological elements have been brought in, but in the main this ancient spot still carries us back into its Oriental past. On the environing hills are duplicates of the orchards and vineyards from which the spies took back the grapes, evidences of the country's wealth, to the waiting and apprehensive Israelites. Along the hidden valleys are the Bedouin horsemen protecting the keepers of flocks, just as David's men in their day guarded from the robber the herdsmen of the pastures. Within the city a few of the crafts are followed, such as lamp and bottle manufacture, along with that of souvenirs; but bazaars, colours and noises remind one that he is in the east. Walking through the vaulted streets you would almost fail to be surprised if you should meet Saladin or David's warriors; and it does not seem impossible that in the dismal synagogue reached by a hundred narrow arches and turnings, stairs and courtyards, the patriarch Abraham himself attended the service. Here a thousand years

are but as a day. Rome and Greece have left for us their history in their ruins, but Hebron, which antedates the Pantheon and the Temple of Theseus, brings forward its past in the lives of the people, who go in and out at its gates and walk its dusty marts.

In making the journey from Jerusalem to Hebron, our first introduction to the Bible landmarks along this route is an area associated with the life of both Old and New Testament times. This is the valley of Ge-Ben-Hinnom, the "Valley of the Son of Hinnom," a deep ravine to the south and west of the Holy City. The Old Testament first mentions it in Joshua 15, as the boundary line between Judah and Benjamin. In the New Testament it is Gehenna, synonym of the abode of eternal torment, this latter name being derived from the former by taking out Ben, and running together Ge-Hinnom. The association of the ground with the final destiny of the wicked developed first from an act of Solomon, who erected high places for Molech on the southern brow of the hill overlooking the valley at its eastern extremity. Molech, the god of the Ammonites, and one of the fire-deities of Assyrian and Canaanitish tribes, was worshipped with the most offensive rites. Among these were human sacrifices, especially the offering of the first-born. Jewish tradition describes the image erected by Solomon as hollow and of brass: "And his face was that of a

calf, and his hands stretched forth." Later, to put an end to the abominations of Hinnom, King Josiah rendered the place ceremonially unclean by spreading over it human bones and other corruptions. Subsequent upon this act it became the rubbish heap of the city, and a fire was kept burning in which garbage was constantly consumed. Hence from the fires of Molech, the ceremonial defilement, and the ever-lighted funeral pile, grew the final New Testament imagery of the wicked being cast into Gehenna.

Hinnom does not look infernal to-day. Its appearance is kindly and inviting. The gardens and orchards of the plain are restful to the eye, and the slopes are carefully terraced with fertile plots that join each other throughout its length in an almost continuous succession.

Little more than half-way between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, there is by the roadside a square, low-domed building, a symbol of sorrow reminiscent of a painful day in the course of a Bedouin procession: "As for me, when I came from Padan, Rachael died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, when yet there was but a little way to come to Ephrath; and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath; the same is Bethlehem" (Gen. 48: 7). The mosque is ill-kept and unattractive, but the ground which it marks is revered alike by two religions; and for us the structure serves a double purpose, reminding us of the passing of one dear to him first called by the name of Israel, and of the

crowning later of Israel's first king when the nation became a monarchy, for it was to this spot that the prophet Samuel directed the newly-crowned Saul with the words: "Thou shalt find two men by Rachael's sepulchre in the border of Benjamin."

The mausoleum of Rachael, like that of her illustrious son Joseph, dwells a solitary figure in the open field, a fitting circumstance for characters that were in life so distinctively set apart from their fellows.

A five-mile donkey ride to the southeast of Bethlehem brings us to Tekoa, the birthplace of the herdsman-prophet Amos, the virile character whose monitor was this rugged expanse of nature in its many expressions, whose omens were in terms of the tempest and the whirlwind; to whom in his rhetorical imagery Israel's God was the Creator of the wind, the Being who formed the mountains, who walked upon the high places of the earth. All this symbolism is brought to mind as we look upon the wilderness of Tekoa, uneven and bare, and cut with precipitous valleys a thousand feet deep and one to two miles wide. The rugged ridges impede the traveller's journey to-day as they did when Amos exclaimed: "Shall horses run upon the rock?" The glistening stones still suggest the difficulty of "plowing with oxen." Again we hear, where gaping caverns tell of the haunts of wild and devouring animals, "As the shepherd rescueth out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear, so shall the children of Israel be taken." And

the full sweep of the heaven as seen from the elevated hill declares as vividly as ever the work of Him who "maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night" (Amos 6: 12; 3: 12; 5: 8).

Tekoa is most popularly associated with the sagacious individual used by David's general to effect a reconciliation of the unforgiving king and his banished son Absalom: "And Joab sent to Tekoa, and fetched thence a wise woman, and said unto her, I pray thee, feign thyself to be a mourner . . . and come to the king, and speak on this manner unto him" (2 Sam. 14: 2–3).

A stone-strewn elevation is now the landmark of the ancient city. Scattered about the hills are parts of walls, columns and cisterns, fragments of a town once important enough to be fortified by Rehoboam, and populous enough to supply workmen for the post-exilic rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls (Neh. 3: 5).

When the despondent writer of Ecclesiastes was in the mood for describing his material accomplishments, he wrote: "I planted me vineyards: I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits. I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees" (chap. 2: 4, 5). Tradition has connected this reference with three tanks called the Pools of Solomon, situated in the Valley of Urtas, nine miles south of Jerusalem. Historians like

Josephus, referring to the rivulets and gardens of Urtas, tell us that here was one of Solomon's rural resorts. It is possible that the reservoirs were used in Bible times to irrigate the vegetation of this valley, and to supply water for the Temple and gardens in Jerusalem. Nothing of the past is left within this area, but the pools that bear the name of Israel's opulent king. After a lapse of many centuries, a recent culture has once more beautified the valley, and the pools are again connected with Jerusalem, providing the city with its chief water-supply. The largest tank is 580 feet long and 148 feet wide, hewn in the rock and lined with masonry. The other two are not much smaller.

The environing territory, and that which lies on the stretch to Hebron, finds its chief Biblical interest in its connection with the life of David. At Aid el Ma to the west, definitely regarded as Adullam, we recall him as the apprehensive minstrel boy hiding in a cave from Saul; and in the rich corn valley of Elah beneath, he is the stripling challenging the ill-fated Goliath. Kila, perched on its steep hill overlooking the same valley, tells of the ungrateful act of the town Keilah, which would have delivered David up to Saul after the young man had saved them from the Philistines. Kharas, seven miles north of Hebron, gave its name to the forest of Hareth, where the son of Jesse went after he had made his parents safe with the king of Moab. Ain Sireh, one-and-a-half miles northwest of Hebron, is probably the Well

of Sireh, where the messengers of the king's general found Abner his rival, bringing him back to the citadel for a treacherous death. And on the east is En-Gedi, at the fountain of which no doubt Israel's second king stopped to drink on the occasion of Saul's most ardent pursuit of his life. Kh. Kufin, six miles north of Hebron, may be Bezah of the times of the Judges, where the Israelites slew ten thousand of Adonibezek's army. Beit-Sur, three miles south of this, was fortified by Rehoboam, in his program of national defense.

Whatever its activities in those stirring days, this region has long been depleted of its population. The ground, especially toward Hebron, shows signs of fertility, a natural condition which we would have supposed to have been an inducement to an extensive industry in indigenous products. But the recent economic changes of Palestine have barely touched this upland interior. Although there are fifty modern colonies along the plain and foothills to the west, the extent to which cultivation is in process along this southern highway is enough only to suggest what the soil may at some time do. No evidence remains of any great tower to mark the section as having been an eventful battle centre in those days when nations were constantly warring with each other. We see no palatial columns like those at Cæsarea and Baalbek, indicating that an empire regarded it as a strategic area. Judged from the ruins that we do find, it was a country not so much of warriors as of folks,

not so much of forts as of homes. Everywhere there are broken cisterns and crumbling terraces, ruined sheepfolds and oil-presses, all evidences of a past domestic type of people, an atmosphere well fitted after all for the rearing of the finest order of men, for the development of a nation's councillors, for the culture of patriarchs, prophets, and seers.

If one cares to take the hilly road running south from Hebron, he will come after twenty-six miles to Beersheba. The striking Bible mark here is a well, twelve feet in diameter and forty-five feet deep. There is nothing pretentious about such an object, but it is enough to lead us to accept the locality as that of the first permanent sanctuary of the Holy Land, when Abraham built an altar and planted a grove, "and called thereon on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God." Wells in those early days were rare things in Palestine, the boring often requiring to be cut through solid rock, an expense too great for any but a rich sheik; and without doubt this spacious excavation is that which gave the plain its name Beersheba, "Well of the Oath," so called because of the covenant made between Abraham and Abimelech.

To Beersheba Isaac brought Rebekah as a bride. In this ancestral abode Jacob obtained by fraud the coveted blessing, and from it fled to his mother's home in Padan-aram. To this shrine he returned when an old man, offering sacrifices prior to his departure into Egypt. Hither Elijah came,

seeking to escape the threats of Queen Jezebel, later to ponder in this quiet retreat the misery of his fate, and to debate the futility of life. And for many centuries the spot was the southern boundary of the Holy Land, as is seen in the popular use of the expression " From Dan to Beersheba." Ruins of buildings lie scattered over the sandy area, indicating the presence at some time of a settled population. But it is impossible from the confused state of the masonry and débris, to discover any ground-plan of a city.

The surrounding country was the territory of the Amalekites, a people so numerous in their day as to be able to resist the invasion of the Hebrews. Looking upon the present desolation, such a circumstance would be difficult to conceive but for the sacred record that Joshua allotted to Judah and Simeon twenty-nine cities, and that traceable ruins indicate a population at one time of almost fifty thousand inhabitants.

Beersheba, like Hebron, is not mentioned in the New Testament, but from its ruins of the early Christian centuries, it must have been then an important town. History also tells us that it was the seat of a Roman *præsidium* and a Christian bishopric. Just before the close of the Turkish dominance there, the place was given special rank because of its character as a trading centre from which the near-by Arabs could be controlled. It has good government buildings, also a main street with a long line of shops, and side streets with

dwellings for about eight hundred people. Modernity has touched the town enough to establish a pump run by gasoline at one of the wells for providing the citizens with drinking water. Some of the houses have their own small cisterns giving water storage for their gardens of bananas and other tropical plants.

The serious drawback of this southern section of Palestine has been through many centuries that of drought, a condition making it the land of the nomad rather than of the sower. Here and there we may see the agriculturist plowing the soil with his camel, scattering his millet seed or plucking by hand the short barley stalks; yet he is likely at any time to be forced out by lack of rainfall, to seek for the cultivation of his crops better-watered regions, leaving the parched ground to the Bedouin with his rambling flocks and herds.

The only evidence of a permanent habitation near Beersheba is Dahariyeh, the ancient Debir, fifteen miles to the north, the frontier town for the capture of which Caleb promised his daughter as a reward. And it is possible that with the exception of traders and government officials, the whole population of this once flourishing region is limited to about fifteen hundred people who plow a little ground after a simple fashion, but who rely chiefly upon their flocks and herds for their support of life.

Thus we see in this changing land a region the last change of which has been not a moving for-

ward with newer customs, but a reversion to type, a reaching back through the centuries until it touches that very primitive life when on this same soil Abraham's shepherd servants quarrelled with those of his neighbour Abimelech. Taking us back to days that antecede the Turk, the Roman and even the Israelite, we see in the nomadic existence as shepherds bring their flocks to the ancient wells, the reënacted life of the patriarch, his dress, his mode of salutation, his peculiarity of gesture, his domestic life, his tent and meal, the only difference being in the change of persons who now occupy the fields of those whose memory we keep and whose faith we seek to emulate.

There are many features within the panorama which need not be regarded as commendable, but to one who loves to look upon the past, there is something of the romantic in it all, a poetry brooding over the scene, keeping us in touch with a history that in many parts of this magic land is gradually being overcast.

III

FROM JERUSALEM TO JERICHO

LEADING from the east wall of Jerusalem, there is a highway that becomes a winding, precipitous passage through the Judæan hills—the road from Jerusalem to Jericho—the road made immortal by our Lord's imperishable parable of philanthropy and brotherhood: "But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion upon him" (Luke 10: 33).

It is a road of symbolism, taking us by the whited sepulchres of the Kidron Valley, those pretentious grottoes to which the Saviour in His striking, figurative language, likened the hypocrites of His day. It is a road of glamour, leading us finally to Jericho, the ancient City of Palms, to ruins of temples and palaces that tell of a glory once the envy of the East.

The first point of interest as we leave the Holy City along this way is the Valley of Jehoshaphat, or the Kidron Valley, the depression into which the road immediately drops. The associations of these slopes link us with a wide period of the world's history. Here, we are led to believe, were laid a vast host of Israel's noted dead, reposing as they do now with the ashes of an innumerable com-

pany of humans assembled from every land and age. For while tradition made this ground to the Hebrew the world's most hallowed necropolis, the development of the Christian and Mohammedan faiths gave the area a further and wider significance as the guardian of the long and dreamless sleep. By each of these religions, Kidron was early regarded as the arena selected by their respective leaders for the Second Advent and the final assembling of the righteous. Hence, because of what it might mean to them, representatives of every family of the human race have sought along these banks a last resting-place—Jews, Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, Saracens, Germans, French and English, a countless multitude borne by loving hands to await within its tender atmosphere the prophecied Resurrection Day. Allotments of space have been sold over and over again, making this habitation of the dead to have been renewed as often as the city of the living which watches reverently above it.

Yet in spite of time and change, this valley owes still its distinction to its connection with great Scripture names. Among its tombs are names such as those of Jehoshaphat, of Zacharias, and of St. James. A monolith cut from the living rock marks the resting-place of King David's rebellious son: "And Absalom reared for himself a pillar which is in the king's dale." Elegant mouldings and fine ornamentations upon the vaults suggest the wealth of the ruling classes, and the seventy niches within

the " Tombs of the Judges " at the head of the valley confirm the supposition that the members of the Sanhedrin were here interred.

A yearly celebration held within the Kidron afforded me an illustration of one of those regrettable changes common to all Palestine, one in which we see places once regarded as sacred turned into centres of irreligious festivity and riot. This was at the Virgin's Tomb, over which stands a Greek church used for worship by five sects—the Greeks, the Roman Catholics, the Armenians, the Abyssinians and the Mohammedans. I witnessed the particular event from the Garden of Gethsemane, a short distance away. It was in the dusk of the evening. Pilgrims of the five religious sects were assembling for a two-days' encampment. The roar of automobiles and the flashing of headlights that accompanied the movement seemed far remote from the quietness that must once have reigned in this historic region. As tent after tent was lighted up, there spread before me the appearance of a phantom city of the Arabian Nights; while the jangle of noises that filled the air suggested the confusion of bedlam rather than the tranquil order of a holy day.

But Gethsemane was to me still a solemn spot, solemn as on those occasions when the Divine Man resorted thither for prayer, retiring so often that the arch-traitor, during the Passover Feast, knew as if by instinct where he might find Him; solemn as when amid the night's darkness and the rustle

of leaves, the air was burdened with an agonizing appeal, " Father, if it be Thy will, let this cup pass from Me." I had within this sanctuary a peculiar sense of the nearness of that Great Sufferer, who, just before His death, came here with His disciples to seek in communion that strength by which He might be prepared for the terrible and final tragedy.

Above Gethsemane is Olivet. Here, too, the Master often lingered. Sometimes it was to converse with His disciples on the mysteries of His Kingdom; sometimes it was to seek an opportunity for quiet seclusion and meditation; sometimes it was to look pathetically upon the city of His fathers, the city that had in the past killed the prophets and that now held for Him a Cross. It was from here that He viewed Jerusalem for the last time, weeping as He did so, and uttering the prophetic words: " For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee . . . and lay thee even with the ground, and thy children with thee " (Luke 19: 43, 44).

During the day I had witnessed a continual procession of pilgrims ascending the hillside. They were proceeding to the Church of the Ascension, a tall Russian church on the summit of the mountain, and from thence going on to the Jordan, where Jesus came " to be baptized of John."

Around the Church of the Ascension are a group of buildings placed there by the Orthodox Church, to mark the spot as a sacred shrine and to minister

to the spiritual and physical needs of its religious devotees.

Behind the shoulder of Olivet is Bethany. This well-known village does not possess any striking beauty. Travellers have written of the sheltering hills in which it lies, of its commanding outlook down the valley, and its pastoral loveliness; but the truth is that it is simply a gathering of colourless houses with flat roofs and narrow windows, such as one sees in many villages in Palestine. The charm of the place to us lies in the story of a simple home where dwelt two sisters and a brother. The guide points out the home which Jesus loved to visit, and directs you to the sepulchre at the mouth of which the Master challenged the power of Death and called forth His friend Lazarus. This tomb is a cave reached by a difficult stairway. The site is probably authentic. Whether or not so, I could not on this spot keep my mind from drifting far into the past, and although my guide kept the cavern vibrant with the deliverance of an enthusiastic, descriptive monologue, I found myself thinking only of the words of One, spoken here nineteen hundred years ago: " I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

The change of landscape as we proceed from Bethany with its terraced orchards is sudden and abrupt, and we begin to sense, as the signs of human habitation fail, the profound and awful silence of a wilderness. The road follows a steep

declivity, passing through winding valleys and gorges, running through barren hills with rock-ribbed sides, whose crests hide from view the many bends and curves of the ill-reputed way. Little wonder that here were the haunts of the country's bandits.

Two dilapidated pieces of masonry along the route give us something of history and tradition. The first is a Roman arch by the wayside, marking the Apostle's Fountain. The second is a ruin described as the Inn of the Good Samaritan. Tradition says of the Apostle's Fountain that Jesus on His last journey to Jerusalem rested here with His disciples, disclosing to them the immediateness of His betrayal and crucifixion. Hence the modern name. The location is probably the En-Shemesh of Scripture, one of the division marks between Judah and Benjamin. It was likely at this fountain that David as a fugitive halted with his men when they "came weary and refreshed themselves there," and where his enemy Shimei with blatant voice bellowed down upon the deposed monarch during that sad flight from his son Absalom: "And as David and his men went by the way, Shimei went along on the hill's side over against him, and threw stones at him, and cast dust." The present Inn of the Good Samaritan, about half-way along the journey, cannot be regarded as having historic value. It does suggest a very probable site of the well-known institution connected with the parable recorded in the tenth chapter of Luke.

The scene presented as the road finally looks down upon the Jordan plain, cannot fail to captivate any student of sacred history. Directly across the river is lofty Nebo, with his companions of the Abarim mountains, Pisgah and Peor pencilled against the sky; to the north is the Mount of Temptation ascending like a precipice, leaving Jericho and Elisha's fountain at its feet; to the south the Dead Sea lies in a dim haze; stretching before the eye is the Jordan plain, and through this, gliding in serpentine form, runs the river from which it takes its name.

Somewhere in this visible section of the Jordan, the Israelites had crossed. Within the area Jesus was baptized of John. Not far away had stood Machærus, the fortress in which John was imprisoned by Herod immediately after this baptism; and on the west of the river had been Gilgal, the first halting-place of the Israelites in their new land. From this scene two unique characters of Scripture, each one a herald of a new day, had bidden farewell to the world—Moses from Mount Nebo, the hill which gave him the wistful view of Canaan; and John the Baptist from Herod's Syrian prison, where he had pondered and doubted the advent of the Messiah. In this region also, two men of similar nature took their last leave of each other, just before " Elisha took up the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back and stood by the banks of the Jordan," while the sons of the prophets at the same time sought vainly for their

vanished friend, "for," as the Second Book of Kings records, "peradventure the Spirit of the Lord hath taken him up and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley."

The valley at the Dead Sea lies twelve hundred and ninety-two feet below sea level. The Jordan empties into a depth which plumbs still twelve hundred and eighty feet more. Hence we have here the globe's greatest surface depression. This phenomenon is accounted for by the fact, if geologists are right, that the Jordan Valley is the result, not of erosion, but of an abrupt drop of a narrow slice of the earth's crust.

The eastern bank of the Jordan furnishes here one of the most interesting landmarks of Old Testament history. Scattered over the steppes and hillsides of Moab are large stones of irregular size and outlined in various orders. These stones have undoubtedly a religious significance, being similar to many found in lands whose primitive inhabitants we know to have been fire or Baal worshippers. Great Britain, for example, was at one time such a land. And on the Moabite steppes there exist in abundance circles with a court on the east, resembling material seen on the summit of Ben Ledi, Scotland, where the rising of the Bal-tein, or Sun-fire, used to be in ancient days awaited. Other Moabite structures duplicate the order of Stonehenge, England—flat tables, some with hollow cups in the centre, with channels running off, giving evidence that libations have been poured upon the

surface. Altars, and stones showing contact with fire, are found without number.

The Biblical association of this place is in Numbers 23, an incident connected with the desert wanderings of the Israelites. Amorites and Ammonites had been defeated by this strange dark people swarming from the south. The marching hordes were now in Moabitish territory, encamped on this narrow plain by the Jordan. Behind them rose the dark heights of the Abarim mountains. The Israelites, expecting any day to strike their black tents and cross the river, beheld a startling spectacle. High on the mountains above them, three separate times in the grey of dawn, they saw the summits circled with a coronet of fire.

The flaming tongues were the sacrificial fires kindled by Balak, king of Moab, directed by Balaam, the master diviner and prophet of the Euphrates. Overawed by the vast numbers of the invading Israelites, Balak at a great cost had secured this arch-enchanter, whose muttered incantations he believed would blast with death, or would place in confusion the portentous camp. Thus " It came to pass on the morrow that Balak took Balaam and brought him up into the high places of Baal, that thence he might see the utmost part of the people. And Balaam said unto Balak, Build me here seven altars and prepare me here seven oxen and seven rams. And Balak did as Balaam had spoken: and Balak and Balaam offered on every altar a bullock and a ram. And Balaam

said unto Balak, Stand by the burnt offering, and I will go: peradventure the Lord will come to meet me: and whatsoever he sheweth me I will tell thee. And he went to a high place" (Num. 22: 41; 23: 1–3).

Three high places in this stone-strewn landscape bear testimony to the Scripture record, being no doubt identical with those to which Balaam was brought. They have borne names representing Mercury, Sun-God, and the Priapus of Moab. Remarkably, on one of these there is a line of seven pillars, strikingly suggestive of the Balaam altar of Numbers, and in connection with which the Arabs have no tradition. Among this mass of material there is at least no extravagance in supposing that some of these monuments are the very ones erected by the mysterious seer of Peor—the man who, looking upon the Israelites beneath, foresaw their prophetic significance and, in spite of a king's injunctions, refused to curse.

Gilgal, the first resting-place of the Israelites in their new land, is traditionally identified with a spot five miles northwest of the Jordan mouth. The Arabs call the location Gijuliah. The ground is marked by a solitary tree. It was from here that Joshua's hosts made their daily march of two miles to Jericho, preparatory to the fall of the city's walls.

Jericho exists only as a heap of ruins. Excavations have laid bare what was once the old Canaanitish city. You walk among the remains of broken

bulwarks, and cross the walls of roofless houses. The parts still intact are of sun-dried brick and bear the marks of fire—possibly the work of the Hebrew invasion: "And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein." There are ruins of a later date, evidences of the city of Hiel, of the time of King Ahab. "In his [Ahab's] days did Hiel the Beth-elite build Jericho . . . according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun" (1 Kings 16: 34). The site is on an upland, seven hundred and fifty feet above the Jordan plain.

The Mount of Temptation, rising above ancient Jericho, is very probably the actual elevation which Jesus ascended immediately following His baptism in the Jordan. All sects in that eastern land believe in the place. A monastery clings to its rugged front, while the plateau above is covered with the ruins of old chapels, tombs, and forsaken images. Here Anchorites and saints gathered centuries ago to imitate the Saviour by fasting and prayer.

The region lying about Jericho is as fertile and fruitful as when Lot looked toward the well-watered plain of Jordan. The fountain of Elisha flows as copiously as it ever did. In these modern days, however, the waters, crystal-clear, are enclosed in an artificial reservoir, from whence they are used for the irrigation of the near-lying tropical orchards.

The present Jericho, a mile and a half to the east, is a small, squalid village, inhabited by a

mixed race of people. The ill-kept settlement suggests a lack of thrift, bearing no resemblance to that Canaanitish fortress of which Joshua said: "Pass on and compass the city, and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of the Lord."

In the immediate suburbs provision is made in the form of hospices and hotels for visitors. Regrettably, the area of this new development was one of those particularly affected by the earthquake of June, 1927. However, the semi-tropical climate and vegetation make the locality an enjoyable winter resort, and construction is likely to go steadily forward.

One supreme Scripture association comes to mind here, as we take again the white road that runs toward the Holy City. It is that of a great soul agony, when One, the greatest of all men, turned His back upon Jericho for the last time, and set His face "steadfastly toward Jerusalem." Standing near the Jericho crossroads, I found myself mentally reënacting the scene as described by Mark: "And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus went before them, and they were amazed; and as they followed they were afraid." For Him there was the road to Galilee, which would have brought popularity; the trans-Jordan passage which would at least have secured ease; but westward! this road that led through the blistering hills to Jerusalem, which must terminate in a cross! I saw Him step out suddenly from His little group, as if in the throe of a great strug-

gle, hands clinched, oblivious of the things on the right or the left, moved like molten lava, while His disciples stand back amazed, watching Him begin that final march, the tragic journey betokening His faithfulness unto death.

These Judæan hills and vales! How eloquent are they with the holiest associations of the race. Following their trails and tracing their ruins one feels still, probably as nowhere else, the throb of a Divine life, the touch of an unseen Presence, the communion of an enfolding influence soft as the air itself; making us one with eager apostles, with vigorous prophets, with far-seeing patriarchs, one with the burning bush, the pillar of fire, and the altar of stones.

IV

FROM JERUSALEM NORTHWARD

FROM the Holy City to Galilee the distance is sixty-five miles. Every foot of the way is alive with Scripture incident; every ridge is history. Standing on the eastern slope of Neby-Samwil, a mountain four and a half miles northwest of Jerusalem, one looks immediately down upon the cradle and early battle centre of the Israelitish nation. To the left is Gibeon, a round hill, once spoken of as a large town "like a royal city, larger than Ai, and all its members stout fighters." It was from here that the unique delegation went to the Hebrew camp at Gilgal to beguile its leader into a peace treaty, carrying their provisions "in old sacks on their asses, and old mended wineskins, with old patched shoes on their feet, and old clothes on their body," a ruse to give the appearance of wayworn travellers arriving from an outlying region. Here at Gibeon is the place where Joshua attacked and routed the five kings gathered to punish its inhabitants for their allegiance to the new invader, the Israelite driving the besiegers with disastrous blows down through the Ajalon Valley to the western plain. At the pool of Gibeon the servants of David and those of Ish-

bosheth originated the fray finally responsible for the death of Abner at Hebron. Abner, who was Ishbosheth's general, fell in revenge by the hand of Joab, David's general, for having killed Joab's brother Asahel in this long-remembered skirmish at Gibeon.

A village faintly seen to the east is Anata, once Anathoth, where Abiathar the high priest found refuge after his opposition to Solomon's coronation, and from whence, three hundred years after, his likewise vigorous descendant, the prophet Jeremiah, trudged to Jerusalem to rebuke the monarchy of his day.

Within the immediate panorama are Gibeah and Nob. At Nob Saul killed eighty-four priests of the tabernacle because of their hospitality to young David when they gave him the shewbread to eat and handed him the sword of Goliath for his defense. Gibeah was Saul's home after his coronation. Within its precincts was enacted that pathetic tragedy, the vigil of Rizpah, when the mother of two of Saul's sons remained by the gallows " from the beginning of the harvest until water dropped upon them out of heaven," and " suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night " (2 Sam. 21: 10). Seven of Saul's sons had been hanged by the Gibeonites, a deed resulting from Saul's insidious disloyalty to Joshua's treaty with this people, and Rizpah's two sons were among the unfortunate victims.

Somewhere among the boulders marking the undulating ground near Gibeah, there hid the trembling shepherd lad of Old Testament story, who waited apprehensively for an arrow from young Jonathan's belt, the shot that was to indicate to him by its distance the attitude of a king, whether he were amicable and disposed to friendliness, or angered and resolved to shed blood. And not far to the northeast is Michmash, where Jonathan again drew his bow, this time having left his father's army and with his armour-bearer climbed the steep Wady Suweineit to settle with the overbearing Philistines.

A few miles to the north lies Beeroth, now Bireh, calling to mind again the stratagem of the fakers to outwit the violent assailants of Jericho and Ai; for evidently Beeroth and two other cities shared with Gibeon in yielding a warless surrender to Joshua, one of the conditions imposed upon them in the terms of the truce at Gilgal. "And the children of Israel journeyed, and came unto their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon and Chephirah and Beeroth and Kirjath-jearim" (Josh. 9: 17).

It is difficult now, as one looks upon this whole scene, to realize its martial and barbarous past. As I viewed it, the air trembled in a milky haze; caravans of camels with their slow, swinging strides moved along the uneven highway; sheep and goats browsed upon the solitary hillsides. There was nothing to suggest the turbulence of human ani-

mosities. "The tumult and the shouting" had died.

From Jerusalem Nob lies two and a half miles. Gibeah, a mile from this, rises in the form of a cone-shaped hill, and terraced from base to summit, it is an object of attraction as the green circles of corn mingle with the white limestone soil. On the top are remains of a tower or large building, but these are without plan or symmetry, and nothing is left to suggest that here was once the residence of Israel's first monarch.

Neby-Samwil, the Prophet's Mountain, regarded as the place of Samuel's birth and death, has long been a shrine for Moslem, Jew and Christian. A mosque and a small village crown its summit.

Gibeon retains evidences of an early fortification and strength. The outline of a large pool built to receive the overflow of five streams testifies to an abundance of water, and a succession of roughly hewn steps shows the way by which the inhabitants reached the cistern from within the city in times of siege. Libation cups carved in the solid rock take us back to Solomon's thousand burnt offerings, and although the glory of the place is gone, we can see that Gibeon must have been in its day one of the chief cities of the Canaanites and the early Hebrews.

The topography of Michmash may be seen today as it was in Jonathan's time, "a sharp rock on the one side and a sharp rock on the other." The steep sides of the wady which the town overlooked

emphasize the difficulty of the prince's ascent from the valley to the white camping-ground of the Philistines, the contempt of the sons of Goliath as they looked upon the presumptuous invader, and their bewilderment as their Hebrew slaves were thrown into revolt against their masters. The word Michmash is retained in Mukmas, the name of the present village upon this site.

Of Beeroth nothing is left to link us with its Biblical past, nor has it taken to itself any of the changes which feature a modern civilization. The town gained some elegance during the period of the Latin kings, and the Knights Templar thought it worthy of being marked by a Gothic church. But Arabs now hold the occupancy of the town, and grass grows where of old knights knelt in prayer and where robed priests chanted their Ave Marias.

Bethel is nine miles north of Bireh. All Bible readers know this landmark as the halting-place of Jacob when he slept, "And behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, the angels of God ascending and descending upon it." "God appeared to me at Luz [Bethel] in the land of Canaan, and blessed me," were the first words of Jacob in his dying utterance to his son Joseph, long years after this incident. The Ark of the Covenant, the sacred paladium symbolizing to the Israelites the presence of Jehovah, found a temporary resting-place at Bethel. With the division of the tribes the town

became a royal residence, and the foundations of a square tower are said to mark the place where the first monarch of the northern kingdom set up two golden calves and dedicated a shrine to interrupt the associations of his subjects with Jerusalem, the southern capital. Nor is Jacob's memory neglected. There is a circle of stones similar to those arranged by early Semitic worshippers, and many think they see in this group the very altar which the young wanderer anointed, and before which he acknowledged the presence of God. Evidently buildings of some significance have stood upon this ground; pieces of dressed stone and marble blocks are scattered over four acres, but a Moslem village usurps the place of past dignity, and the religion of the Mussulman has taken over the power and perquisites of its ancient established priesthood and cult.

Six miles further, making sixteen miles north of Jerusalem, there runs out from the central chain a stony ridge roughly scarred by the excavator's pick, and covered by a mass of ruins of various civilizations. For three hundred years the early Israelites made this hillcrest the home of their common faith. "Then they said, Behold, there is a feast of the Lord in Shiloh yearly in a place which is on the north side of Beth-el, on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Beth-el to Shechem" (Judg. 21: 19). After their long wandering in the wilderness, the people first localized their religion here at Shiloh, building their tabernacle

1444 B. C. On this hill Eli judged the people, and fell dead at the sad news of the capture of the Ark. Here the child Samuel grew up, and attended the doors of the house of God. Archeologists have been at work on the ground since 1922, and their excavations are bringing to light not only Byzantine and Roman remains, but many apparent ruins also of the old Israelitish city, along with much that may effect a remarkable contribution to the present wealth of Scriptural corroboration.

St. John tells us that upon one occasion when Jesus desired to go from Judæa to Galilee, He must needs go through Samaria. A place has been immortalized along this route because of an interruption of the journey, when Jesus paused to rest while His disciples went into the city to buy meat. This mark is at a point where the main road to Galilee forks into two branches, the one keeping northward through the old capital of Tirzah, and the other turning to the west. "Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus, therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour." Here, in conversation with a Samaritan woman, Jesus declared Himself to be the world's anticipated Messiah: "I that speak unto thee am He" (John 4: 6, 26).

The disciples have gone to their reward; the locality has shared the varied fortunes of Crescent and Cross; the Samaritans' disputes have lost their importance; but the words once spoken here by this weary traveller resound throughout the world,

and the Well of Jacob has been made to all time a hallowed place because of them.

A newly constructed Greek church stands today over this spot. We have no hesitation in accepting the site. Samaritans, Jews, Mohammedans and Christians alike believe in its authenticity and the centuries have jealously guarded it. The altar of the church is placed close by the curb, and an artifice hangs over the well by which the attendant priest lowers candles that one may look down to the water's surface. The whole cavity, bored through solid rock, plumbs seventy feet.

Joseph's tomb is less than half a mile from the Well of Sychar. We look upon a low-domed mosque, and without it an enclosure which is said to contain the revered sarcophagus. It is possible that this solitary monument may have more than a traditional significance. From the Book of Genesis we know that Joseph requested his fellowmen to carry his body back to the land of his childhood; and in Joshua we read that this hero of two nations, borne from Egypt to Palestine by the Israelites, was buried in Shechem. It is a fitting resting-place for such a historic figure, keeping company with the very land where he walked as a youth, and shadowed by the everlasting hills, upon one of which sleep Eleazer and Phineas, son and grandson of Aaron, Israel's first high priest.

Two miles further, along a pleasant valley, is one of the oldest settlements, as well as one of

the most beautiful landmarks in Palestine—the town of Nablous. As Nablous it means perhaps nothing to us; but as Shechem, its Biblical name, it is full of rich romance. Built on the ground which Jacob bought from the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for " a hundred pieces of money," the location had been the halting-place of Abraham, and in keeping with its historic past became the spot where Joshua in his old age called the tribes together for the great injunction, " Choose ye this day whom you will serve." The present name is a corruption of Neapolis, the title given the city by Vespasian. The place is favoured with an abundant water-supply, and is surrounded by a fertile country. From this cause and others, it has been throughout the centuries a busy and prosperous centre.

Nablous had a torn and devastated appearance when I saw it. More than any other area in Palestine, it had suffered from the earthquake of June, 1927. I was told that two hundred lives had been lost in the catastrophe. The aftermath of this was not an unmixed evil. A Jew informed me that a few years ago a Hebrew entering Nablous was in danger of being stoned by members of his sworn enemy living within the city. Since the calamities which the inhabitants suffered from the earthquake, these people have been disposed, he told me, toward a kindlier attitude, on account of the liberal aid given by their neighbours in an hour of panic and distress.

The only lingering colony of the Samaritans is at Nablous, which lies at the foot of Mount Gerizim, their sacred sanctuary, as hallowed to them to-day as it was when the Samaritan woman contended: "Our fathers worshipped on this mountain." The sect, who maintain that they are the only pure and unmixed children of Jacob by Joseph's sons Ephraim and Manasseh, observe a religious creed with four fundamentals: (1) Belief in Jehovah as the only God; (2) Belief in Moses as the only lawgiver; (3) Belief in the Pentateuch as the only Divine Book; (4) Belief in Mount Gerizim as the only House of God. Each year on the fifteenth day of their month Nisan (April), they celebrate on their holy hill the ancient Passover of the Israelites, which they claim to have kept since its establishment at Gilgal. For this ceremony a fire is kindled over which two cauldrons of boiling water are placed. At sunset seven lambs are slaughtered by men dressed in robes of unbleached calico, who dip their fingers in the streaming blood, and with it mark the foreheads and noses of the children of the assembled cult. At midnight the lambs are taken up, when the Paschal feast commences. A long and tedious service peculiar to the day is recited, and when the reading arrives at a certain point, all the expectant listeners stoop at once, and as if in haste and hunger, tear away the flesh with their fingers, carrying portions to the women and children in the tents. In a few minutes the whole of the

sacrificial elements disappear, except some fragments which are carefully gathered up, and with the bones are burned in a fire kindled for that especial purpose according to Scriptural command.

This ancient people has now dwindled to about forty families, consisting of one hundred and fifty souls. Here, where for centuries their fathers worshipped, they abide by Mount Gerizim, the height which bids to be an anchor to hold them fast at its foot until the race is extinct and their name known only as a part of history.

The two hills, Gerizim and Ebal, standing on opposite sides of the valley, are still called by the natives the Mount of Blessing and the Mount of Cursing, reminding us that from these slopes Joshua declared to the people the benefits and threats of the Divine commands. The distance across the valley is only half a mile, and the human voice is easily carried from one hillside to that which faces it. Thus a natural theatre was here provided for the event of the far-reaching declamation of the great moral laws.

There is an inescapable fascination about the scenes of this locality. I vividly recall an evening spent leisurely in its precincts. A delicious aroma filled the air; leaves of the fruit-trees rustled in the gentle breeze; the tops of trees and rocks united in a romantic picture as the beams of the lowering sun stole quietly over them, and from the slope above Nablous the whole scene trembled in

a translucent atmosphere like an image reflected in the waters of a Swiss lake.

I wondered if it might not have been such an hour when Jesus visited this valley and sat "weary," and if He had not amid such glory found a deep sense of Divine communion, bringing Him spiritual rest and refreshment. His words to the wondering disciples bore at least some such suggestion: "His disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of" (John 4: 31, 32).

V

SAMARIA

EIGHT miles from Nablous is the site of the ancient and once populous Samaria. The name Samaria when first used in Scripture stood for a city, the capital of the Northern Israelitish kingdom. Later it came to represent a province. The site of the city was selected and first occupied as a capital by Omri, father of the noted Ahab who so often came into conflict with Elijah. Omri "bought the hill of Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, Samaria" (1 Kings 16: 23). The Israelitish kings had lived at Tirzah from the days of Jeroboam, but during the attack which Omri made upon the citadel to secure the throne, the royal palace of Tirzah had been burnt to the ground. This circumstance, together with the superior position of Samaria, led to the transfer of the capital to the latter location. The new metropolis was a remarkable combination of strength and beauty. Standing on an elevation of six hundred feet, its position yielded a commanding view, especially to the west, where it looked as far as the plain of Sharon and the Mediterranean

Sea. Here at Samaria, in the midst of wealth and luxury, the kings of Israel reigned, rivalling at times the Eastern monarchs in elegance and wickedness.

The mansion of Omri at Samaria not being ostentatious enough for his son Ahab, the young king built for himself within the city an "ivory palace," and in keeping with the religion of his heathen wife Jezebel, a gorgeous temple was provided for the worship of Baal. It was Ahab, the second occupant of this capital, "who did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him." And the crimes and iniquities of Omri's successor come back to us in vivid pictures as we step within the walls where he heard his death sentence from the prophet of Jehovah, and where the dogs licked the blood that trickled from his chariot.

In contrast to these odious associations of its kings, one of the most humane episodes of early Old Testament history is linked with Samaria—an incident of sympathy and thoughtfulness for others strangely out of keeping with the ruthlessness of the times, and prophetic of kindlier days. Two hundred thousand women and children had been taken prisoners of war and brought to the capital. Instead of being dealt with according to the customary order of warfare, their confiscated goods were restored and their wrongs redressed. "And the men which were expressed by name rose up, and took the captives, and with the spoil clothed

all that were naked among them, and gave them to eat and drink, and anointed them, and carried all the feeble of them upon asses, and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm-trees, to their brethren: then they returned to Samaria" (2 Chron. 28: 15).

Following the Assyrian invasion which reduced Israel to captivity, Samaria became a ruin. It enjoyed a second brilliance under Herod the Great who rebuilt it and renamed it Sebaste, the Greek form for Augusta. One of the chief buildings of this period was the temple placed in the centre of the city, constructed at an immense cost as a monument to Herod's magnificence and fine taste.

Surveying to-day the high ridge of Israel's ancient capital, one recalls the words of one of our own poets:

"Though he his house of polished marble build,
Yet shall it ruin like the moth's frail cell."

The Scripture prophecy, "therefore will I make Samaria as a heap of the field," has been dramatically fulfilled. A Herodian colonnade, once numbering one hundred and seventy pillars, has for its only evidence a mass of fallen limestone shafts. The most conspicuous piece of masonry on the ground is part of a wall of a Crusaders' church erected over the supposed burial-place of the wilderness-prophet, and hence called the Church of St. John the Baptist. Archeologists have found the

area a rich field for exploration, having unearthed outlines of Omri's mansion, the marble-fronted or ivory palace of Ahab, and the temple which this king built for Baal. Among the restored material is a record of the Assyrian attack of 721 B. C., describing the tediousness of the siege endured at that time, and the finality of the invader's work in his assault upon the noted fortress.

The only sign of human life upon the famous hill to-day is the squalid Arab settlement of Sebustyeh, an uninviting village clinging, as one has said, "like a mean and tattered flag on a great mast-head where once flew some of the noblest banners of the earth."

Passing on northward, we come after four miles to Jeba, the ancient Geba. This is the point to which the Eastern monarch brought his transport after the conquest of the Northern Kingdom, preparatory to a raid into Judæa. There is nothing of particular importance at Jeba, but if we swing from the highway ten miles eastward toward the Jordan we may see Teisasir. This was once Tirzah, the capital of the first six kings of the revolting ten tribes. Tirzah's distinction ended with the death of Zimri, its last regal occupant, who slew his predecessor here to secure the Israelitish throne. Zimri, a commander of half the king's chariot force at Tirzah, had seized the opportunity to usurp the reigning power when Elah the king had been too long "looking upon the wine when it was red in the cup," and his own death followed

seven days later with the burning of his capital by Omri. The recalling of Zimri's treacherous deed and its retribution was the taunt which Queen Jezebel, a generation later, threw into the face of her threatening assassin, Jehu: "Had Zimri peace when he slew his master?" (2 Kings 9: 31).

Tirzah was extolled by Canticles as a city of beauty "comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners" (Cant. 6: 4). The village has no glory to-day. Ruins of ancient buildings lie upon the ground, and there are traces of old sepulchres which may have been those of the early kings before the royal families occupied Samaria, but nothing else remains to bear witness to a past renown.

Resuming the main highway, we reach Tel-Dothan, twelve miles north of Samaria. We need not accept the particular spot marked as Joseph's pit, but we do know that somewhere in this area the name Dothan received its immortality from the wanderings of a youth bearing food to his shepherd brethren. Here one day a group of young fellows huddled together, watching the approach of a lad who had, as they thought, been telling tales out of school, a day painfully recalled years after in Egypt when they said one to another, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us" (Gen. 42: 21).

To this same region of Dothan came the army of

Benhadad king of Syria, the host that struck terror to Elisha's servant as he looked out in the morning and beheld their array. The story is more familiar to us in the sequel: "And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man and he saw: and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha" (2 Kings 6: 17). The Syrian king had previously planned an attack upon Samaria. His campaign secrets had leaked out, and upon Elisha had been laid the blame. It was believed that he had heard in the distance "what the king had said in his bedchamber." The enraged monarch had then turned his attention from Samaria to the prophet, thinking it the first essential to take into custody this interfering mind-reader.

Standing in the midst of this amphitheatre of receding hills, it is easy to visualize the dramatic incident of the encamped host, the terror-stricken servant, and the fearless prophet.

VI

ESDRAELON

EIGHT miles from Dothan to the northwest brings us to El-Lejjun, the ancient Megiddo. Megiddo was the name that later came to be the synonym used in Revelation for the crucial and final war between right and wrong, the war of " the great day of God the Almighty . . . and they gathered them into the place which is called in Hebrew Armageddon." " Har " means hill, therefore the prophetic place is the hill of Megiddo.

It was not, however, this particular hill itself that gave the symbolism to the word Armageddon. It was the spacious arena into which it led, and of which it stood as guardian, namely, the plain of Esdraelon. This plain, a great prairie in the heart of the land, probably once an inland sea, is a stretch running from the Mediterranean to the valley of the Jordan. It was crossed in ancient times by great national highways leading to the north, south, east and west, and was a convenient halting-place for any exploiting army. Its width, which varies considerably, is greatest between the hills of Galilee and those of Samaria, being here about fourteen miles.

The map sometimes shows this lowland as two

plains, *i. e.*, the plain of Jezreel and the plain of Megiddo. The name "Jezreel" or "deepening" is derived from the eastern slope running into the Jordan valley, the name Megiddo—"widening," from the western opening reaching toward the sea. The whole area is generally known as Esdraelon, the Greek form of the Hebrew word Jezreel.

Historic landmarks border Esdraelon on every side. To the west lies Mount Carmel, from earliest times a shrine where Divinity might be sought and found. Man, in his primitive reaching toward the mystic and the eternal, had covered it with altars to Baal. Then in a later and better day had come Jehovah's spokesman Elijah, whose voice resounded within the hollow caverns of the mountain, where he taught his generation of prophets, and to which he has left his name.

On the east, running north and south, is an undulating, flexible chain of peaks, the southern extremity terminating in blue-topped Gilboa, the northern ending with the green bower of Tabor, and midway between these little Hermon. In front of Mount Gilboa, on a cape running down to the plain, and with a view sweeping east and west, was once Jezreel. At the foot of little Hermon, lying within two or three miles of each other, stood Shunem, Endor, and Nain, all names of Scriptural significance. To the north are the hills of Galilee, the mountains amid which the Divine man grew up, the slopes and fields that gave Him His symbols for His sermons—the tender images of the

Lamb, of the fold, and of the Good Shepherd. On the south is the Megiddo Pass, the gateway through which the unnumbered legions of martial days rushed down upon the deciding battleground of Esdraelon, now called by one writer " The Land of the Last Romance."

The records of three great battles give the Plain of Esdraelon its Biblical distinction. The first of these is in Judges 4, the encounter between Deborah and Jabin, conducted by their respective generals Barak and Sisera. Deborah was a prophetess living in the hills of Ephraim. Jabin was a king in northern Palestine, who was continually raiding Gilboa and the Ephraim territory. The men of Israel seemed to be at that time slow to drive out their enemy. Deborah took upon herself this task, and incited Barak to gather a small body of troops and to establish them on Mount Tabor. Jabin's men, commanded by Sisera, with nine hundred iron chariots were encamped at Taanach, five miles from Megiddo. His chariots being of service only in the lowlands, it was the design of Sisera to decoy the Israelites down from the hilltop. Barak, knowing this circumstance, made his descent in the night-time while Sisera's armies slept. The elements that attended the dawn favoured Barak: " The rain descended, the winds blew, the floods came," causing the swell of the river Kishon, and making the roads impassable for Sisera's chariots. The northern general in the dilemma took to his heels, leaving his men to

scramble. "Sisera lighted down off his chariot, and fled away on his feet. But Barak and the Israelites pursued after the chariots, and after the host into Harosheth of the Gentiles: and all the host of Sisera fell upon the edge of the sword; and there was not a man left" (Judg. 4: 15, 16).

A little later the Israelites found this territory again contested. The invaders were the Midianites, the Amalekites, and the children of the East. These desert wanderers crossed over from the trans-Jordan to the cultivated fields of Israel: "For they came up with their cattle and their tents, and they came as grasshoppers for multitude; for both they and their camels were without number, and they entered into the land to destroy it. And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites; and the children of Israel cried unto the Lord" (Judg. 6: 5, 6). Gideon, a man first of timidity and afterwards of chivalrous courage, assumed the leadership in attacking the new enemy. His method of attack was novel and effective. Having realized within himself the paralyzing influence of fear, he decided to try its effect upon the Midianites. Arming his men with trumpets and pitchers and lamps, he ordered them as darkness crept on to surround the enemy's camp. In the night, the Midianites awoke to the bedlam of clashing pottery, the deafening blasts of three hundred trumpets, and the united shout from three hundred throats: "The sword of the Lord and Gideon," while the terrifying light of three

hundred lamps moved in the air in weird and mysterious circles. The Midianites took no chances on what such things might be, but rushed wildly toward the Jordan, where Gideon's men were still at their heels, " faint, yet pursuing."

The third disastrous battle on this ground was fought between Josiah king of Judah and Pharaoh Necho of Egypt (2 Chron. 35). Necho, proceeding against an enemy in the northeast, was making use of Palestine as a highway. Josiah interposed with an army. He " disguised himself that he might fight with him, and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from the mouth of God, and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo " (v. 22). The battle went to the Egyptian Pharaoh. The archers shot at King Josiah: "And the king said to his servants, Have me away, for I am sore wounded. His servants therefore took him out of that chariot and put him in the second chariot that he had; and they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died and was buried in one of the sepulchres of his fathers. And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah " (vs. 23, 24).

Up to this day Esdraelon has been especially a spot on which great nations have fought out their disputes. Here was the last struggle of the Christian Crusaders, the army supposedly fighting in the name of Him who said, " Put up thy sword." Across this ground Napoleon, followed by the black tents of the Bedouins, fell back upon the first great retreat of his career, having abandoned his mon-

strous idea of an Empire upon the Euphrates. And here in the war of 1914–1918, the British effected a *coup d'état,* dealing the Turkish army a blow from which it never recovered, and thus depleting materially the forces of the Alliance.

A great transformation has in these years taken place over the surface of Esdraelon, one that may be prophetic of a day when the "sword shall be beaten into the ploughshare." In 1909 there was commenced a scheme for draining out the swamps and reclaiming the land for agriculture. Since the war the work has gone ahead by rapid strides, and interesting colonies are taking the place of barren desolation. Trenches have been dug and pipes laid to take care of the overflow of the Kishon and its tributaries. Eucalyptus groves have been planted to absorb humidity. I asked an agriculturist there regarding the success of the eucalyptus experiment. He replied that it was no longer an experiment, but a proven value. There are more than a hundred colonization developments in Palestine, and a large number of these are situated in the vicinity of Esdraelon.

Four different social systems are recognized among the colonists. The characteristic feature or basis of these is communism. Of the systems, the Kvutzah and the Moshav forms claim the greatest following. With the Moshav, buying and selling are done through a general store. Mutual aid is recognized where need arises. The Kvutzah is unique in that all children are cared for by the

colony under expert attention. Ain Harod, clinging to the side of Gilboa, near the fountain of Jezreel, is an example of the Kvutzah type of colonization. The communal nurseries and schools are modern and scientific, with trained nurses and attendants. Carrying out the socialistic idea to its fulfillment, the colony make Karl Marx their patron saint. His picture hangs at the head of a spacious common dining-hall. It is a strange contrast, this German socialist looking from canvas upon the very ground that was ruled by Ahab, one of the most despotic of the world's monarchs.

Not far from Ain Harod is another novelty, part of the great social experiment. This is Kfar Yeladim, the children's village, populated and conducted by children who were orphaned in the Ukraine. Everything here is done by the children themselves, including government and distribution of justice, and the teachers merely supervise where necessary. About one hundred and fifteen children live in this colony.

Colonies dot each side of the road running across the plain from Jenin to Nazareth. As examples of the development program, the first of these, Merhavia, has two sections, representing the two communal forms of government. Afule and Balfouria which follow, are both on the land of the American Zion Commonwealth, exceptions to the other settlements. Further along is Kfar Gideon, a Moshav of Jews from Transylvania. Each family has twenty-five acres of land. Across the road is Zrif-

fin, one large estate conducted on a coöperative basis, and close to the Galilean hills is Tel Adashim, another Moshav.

No doubt these socialists in this changing land think they have made great advances upon the customs of the countries from which they came, but one cannot visit their organizations without feeling that even for themselves the problem of social economics is still far from being solved. A University-trained Jew living near by remarked to me of these Karl Marxians that they had an impossible plan. "I would not mind," he said, "sharing in common with my neighbour whom I know well enough to trust, but there would be so many strangers in whom I could not have reached that confidence."

The settlements that mark the fertile plain give the suggestion of typical pioneering. The whole setting as I looked upon it carried my mind to some of the sections of the Western prairies. The quietness of evening as it came on resembled the evening of the Indian summers. The variety and description of the buildings, the land surveys, the habits of the people, the laughter of children rising from treeless fields—these were a counterpart of a life I had often witnessed in the great Northwest. I still think of the charm of this place, a modernity set like a cameo carved in relief, on a background of one of the most ancient and traditional of lands.

VII

AREA SURROUNDING ESDRAELON

WITHIN the surrounding area of Esdraelon we find two ancient sites whose histories have run phenomenally parallel through the ages of man. The one is Megiddo, already mentioned, once the guardian of the southwestern entrance to the plain; the other is Beth-shan, near Gilboa, built on the southeastern pass which enters Esdraelon from the Jordan Valley.

The strategic position of the two ancient cities thus located gave them a repeated prominence in the historical movements of the East. Half-way between these there was Engammin, of Joshua 19, now the village of Jenin, built on a pass leading down from the central ridge, but its significance was meagre. The great highways were those which passed the forts of Megiddo and Beth-shan, the competing nations in turn marking their deeds within these boundaries.

Megiddo was destroyed after the Bible period and has remained a ruin. The Romans kept a legion there and so formed a settlement which was named Legio. The site has taken on a new interest since excavations were begun there in 1903.

One important discovery has been a personal record of his visit to Palestine by Pharaoh Shishak, the invader who in the days of Rehoboam stole the golden shields from the Temple. No previous confirmation of the Biblical narrative had ever been found in the Holy Land. Ruins of a temple and images of Ashtaroth, a Canaanitish idol, have been laid bare, together with evidences of human sacrifices which add a gruesome feature to the story. Foundations of fortresses and of a governor's palace tell of organized warfare, while objects of flint and stone carry us back to the Stone Age. A beautiful pedestal made of bronze, representing a woman holding a flute to her mouth, her feet on a tripod, show us that there was an artistic touch even at this great centre of war.

Beth-shan lies twenty-five miles east, and five miles south, of Megiddo. It is brought into Biblical prominence in connection with the death of Saul: "And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen in Mount Gilboa . . . and they put his armour in the house of Ashtaroth: and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth-shan" (1 Sam. 31: 8, 10).

Ancient Beth-shan was on the rounded top of a grey mound. Its excavations revealed implements of the Stone Age. Lying first above these were Egyptian ruins of Rameses II and Seti I, the walls of their fortresses standing six feet high when the excavators found them. These were the walls

upon which the bodies of Saul and his sons were hung. In the strata above these were traces of Scythian civilization, dating from the period of Christ's day, when the city was called Scythopolis, taking its name from a people who invaded Palestine about 600 B. C. Ruins of the Greek period were found, among them a temple with Corinthian pillars six feet in diameter. Still higher lay remains of Christian churches of the third and fourth centuries, and above these, ruins of Arab dwellings with those of a mosque and fort from the Moslem invasion of 632 A. D.

While Megiddo and Beth-shan alike take us back to the Stone Age, Beth-shan has this unique distinction, that it has recorded all the successive civilizations of the world from that distant and obscure period, making an unbroken line to its inhabitants of the present day.

The present Beth-shan, or the Arabic Beisan, is a town of three thousand inhabitants, mostly Moslems. It is the centre of a sub-district with some forty villages attached to it, among which there are five Jewish colonies.

Turning again westward from Beth-shan, we approach the hilly range of Gilboa, the region in which Saul met his fate. The Philistines, we read, were camped at Shunem, which lay at a northern angle. From here they marched around to Aphek, believed to have been on the western side. By this manœuvre they turned Saul's flank, leaving him no option but to retreat down the valley eastward

toward the Jordan: "Now the Philistines fought against Israel: and the men of Israel fled from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa" (1 Sam. 31: 1). Fekua, an Arab village nearly at the summit of the mountain, may represent the Aphek of Samuel.

Proceeding to where the Esdraelon side of Gilboa almost touches the plain, we come to a place that intensifies to our minds the sinister temperament of the times. This is Jezreel, where Ahab and the wicked Queen Jezebel made temporary visits. It may have been the summer residence of the royal family, being easily reached from the Samaritan capital lying fifteen miles to the southwest. It is first mentioned in Joshua 19: 18: "And their border was toward Jezreel." It is later found in 1 Samuel 29, as the camping-place of the Israelites under Saul during the time of his quarrels with David. Here Saul's grandson, Ishbosheth, was executed. From this point Ahab and his courtiers rode eighteen miles to Mount Carmel for their contest with Elijah over the true worship. At Jezreel Queen Jezebel incited her king to kill Naboth, because the latter had refused to sell his vineyard. Joram, Ahab's son, came to Jezreel for medical treatment for his wounds after a battle with the Assyrians. Hither Jehu lashed his galloping steeds for his final stroke at the reigning dynasty, the terror-stricken Jezebel within her palace reading the ominous meaning of his furious driving. The blows of the anarchist fell first on

Joram outside the city gates. A few minutes later a queen, defiant in paint and cosmetics, was hurled mercilessly from her window to the ground.

The fountain of Jezreel is still there. In its natural state it flowed away from the foot of Gilboa fifteen feet wide and two feet deep. An arched cavern, spacious enough for one to ride in on horseback, has been washed out at its orifice by the waters' action. The copious spring has been called also Gideon's fountain, because Gideon brought his men here to effect his selection of the famous three hundred. The fountain is now connected, not with warfare's destructive manœuvres, but with industry and economic development, its waters being gathered in a modern reservoir for the purpose of irrigating the lands of the near-by colonists.

An Arab village, Zerim, stands two miles distant from the spring. It may be upon the site of Jezreel, and so would be in its sordidness all that is left of a once proud and voluptuous court.

Four miles north of Zerim we come to a triumvirate of small towns that skirt the base of Little Hermon. The first of these is Sulem, which is called by its ancient name, Shunem, in 2 Kings 4: 8: "And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread." The next is Nain, two miles north. It is interesting to read together two Scripture incidents, one in the Old Testament and the other in the New, which particularly bring

these adjoining sites into prominence. The records are historic gems of tenderness and sympathy, coming to us from a world and time in which sorrow and indifference were poignantly interposed.

"And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead and lay upon his bed. He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord . . . and the child opened his eyes, And he called Gehazi and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son. Then she went in and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground and took up her son, and went out" (2 Kings 4: 31–37).

"And it came to pass the day after that he [Jesus] went into a city called Nain. . . . Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. . . . And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier; and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother (Luke 7: 11–15).

Shunem presents only a drab Arab village, retaining no physical suggestion of the character of its past. Nain is marked with ruined heaps and traces of walls which show that the town was walled and therefore with gates, according to the Gospel narrative.

Curving a little northeast from Nain, we find, after two miles, the site of Endor. Here King Saul came stealing over the shoulder of Gilboa the night before his tragic end, to visit the witch of Endor: "When Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he

was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled. . . . And his servants said unto him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at En-dor. And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night" (1 Sam. 28: 6–8).

Tabor is only three miles from Endor, and is easily recognized. From the south it describes the arc of a circle, from the east it rises abruptly like a cone, while from the west the wedge-shape of the pyramid is suggested. The prominence of the mountain has caused it to be regarded as the place of the Transfiguration. Jerome wrote of it as such, and this site was selected by Raphael for his picture of the disciples dazzled by the light of heavenly effulgence. Empress Helena is said to have carried out here the wish of Saint Peter, that there might be built three tabernacles, "one for Thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias." In keeping with these sacred traditions, a Franciscan church and monastery now crown its summit.

The height of Tabor is eighteen hundred and sixty-five feet above sea-level. It rises nearly a thousand feet above the general average of the surrounding plain. It is six miles east of Nazareth, and almost due west of the southern bend of the Sea of Galilee, eleven miles distant.

VIII

GALILEE

THE hills of Galilee, bordering the northern edge of Esdraelon, bring us to a new atmosphere. Leaving behind the gruesome thoroughfare of war, we are among the most familiar places of the early life of Him whose title is " Prince of Peace." Nowhere as here are awakened so many hallowed recollections of His holy, unselfish life, His beneficent ministry, His lofty teaching.

Nazareth, in which Jesus grew up, lies in a hollow of these hills at an elevation of one thousand feet above the sea. The town is now the chief commercial meeting-point of the seedmen and carriers from the eastern deserts, and the merchants of the western seaports. Many modern societies, philanthropic organizations and educational bodies are also to be found within its precincts. Among New Testament sites the priests point out what they declare to be the carpenter's house, Mary's kitchen, and the synagogue in which Jesus taught—places that would be sacred indeed if one could be confident of their authenticity. We turn from them, disappointed that there is so little to substantiate the claims for these traditions.

There are some physical features within the area,

the association of which with the Christ life is not a great difficulty. Within the village women still carry water from Mary's Well. Hither, without doubt, the mother of Jesus often came, holding with one hand her pitcher on her shoulder and with the other leading her infant son. There are still the heights above the town from which Jesus must often have looked forth upon a land that had waited a thousand years for His coming, and received Him not when He came. There is pointed out a hill called the Mount of Precipitation, possibly the actual spot to which He was carried by His enemies to be hurled therefrom. Leaving the Holy City, and all the renowned places of the world, He had come to this rude and despised mountain village to speak for the first time the most gracious words that have ever been uttered on earth. In the humble synagogue of Nazareth, He had made the declaration which the faithful in Israel had waited for ages to hear, and had died without the sound. But the prophet was without honour in His own country, and so they cried out against Him. With deafening cries they broke up the assembly, and hurried Him forth to the brow of a near-by precipice.

The little village of Cana lies four miles from Nazareth. We know of it as the scene of Jesus' first miracle. It was the home of Nathanael (John 21:2), and the place where the nobleman from Capernaum won by his faith the cure of his son lying dangerously ill at home (John 4: 46). A

church erected for the purpose claims to represent the site of the marriage feast, and a priest within points further to a row of vessels which he says are replicas of the very pitchers used on that occasion.

But churches and priests do not impress us or command our attention at Cana any more than at Nazareth. One thought alone absorbs us. It is a deepening consciousness that a great memory lingers undisturbed among these hills and valleys—the memory of One whose presence here, has given to these villages and fields an everlasting place in the annals of time.

" Sunlit sea, what mem'ries golden
Hover round thy tranquil shore."

West of the Sea of Galilee, on the way from Cana, a hill with a twin summit rises two hundred feet above the plateau. The hill is called Hattin, and the summits are known as the horns of Hattin. The two peaks form part of the sides of an ancient crater. Tradition has it that on this mountain the Beatitudes were first uttered. A large crowd could gather in Hattin, and a teacher seated at some point above them could easily be heard far and near. The spot has been regarded as the pulpit where for the first time people listened to a Lawgiver greater than Moses, to a religion without priesthood or temple—a religion of holy love and true righteousness.

Whether or not this be the Mount of Beatitudes,

as it is also called, the ascent of Hattin is more than worth while, because of the view it affords of that area particularly associated with the Master's ministry. To the southeast stretches the Saladin Plain, which Jesus must often have crossed on His way from Nazareth to the Galilæan Sea. To the north Hermon rises like a cloud of incense, reminding us that in that region Peter made his great Confession. Eastward, the barren heights of Bashan attract the eye to " the other side of the lake." Below lies the sapphire lake, a focus of industry and military activity at the time of our Saviour. On the shore is Capernaum, so much the second home of Jesus that the sacred writer thought it worthy to be called " His own City."

The Sea of Galilee fills the bed of a volcanic rift among the highlands. The waters from the hills have run down and filled the mouth of the surface out of which the earth-fires once flamed. The steam, rising from hot and sulphurous fountains flowing across the white beach at the southern extremity, proves that the fires are still burning underneath. The lake looks less than its actual size because of its depth between the parted hills, and the clearness of the atmosphere which brings the encompassing walls apparently near each other. Harp-shaped in outline, the length of the body of water is twelve and a half miles, and its width at the broadest point is seven. It lies 682 feet below sea-level, and at one point its depth below that plumbs 838 feet.

The mountains on the eastern side of the lake rise to a height of nearly two thousand feet, and the general impression is that of a bare, rugged wall of rock, cleft here and there by deeply gashed torrent beds. For nearly two-thirds the length of the water basin the hills come down close to the beach. The variation is in the northwestern section of the shore. Here the lake was bordered in the Master's day with a profusion of flowers and an abundance of ripening fruits. A green band lying between the white beach and the base of the hill was crossed and fed by streams bursting from the foot of the red and yellow cliffs. In one place the narrow band widened to the breadth of nearly three miles, forming a crescent-like recession known as the Plain of Gennesaret, "the garden of princes," "Paradise."

When the sky is clear, and the sun is high at noon, and the scathed and furrowed cliffs cast no shadow upon the still surface of the water, the whole setting has a desolate expression, as if lying under the spell of some awful doom. But the scene is changed when the day breaks with the glory of an eastern dawn over the hills of Bashan, or the evening casts its purple shadow from Tabor and the Mount of Beatitudes, or a sudden blast rushes down the wild gorges of the high tablelands, and lashes the whole surface of the lake into snow-white foam.

Here in this region, in our Saviour's day, was the busiest life of all Palestine. Its hills, now bare,

were covered with vineyards; its shores were studded with towns and hamlets; its waters were a great commercial route, bringing the merchandise of Damascus to the south, and the balm of Gilead to the west. Among the numerous inhabitants of the seaside villages there was ample scope for the Great Physician's labours. Here dwelt the Galilæan nobleman, the Gentile centurion, the publicans, the fisherman of the lake—all collected in great numbers to witness His miracles and to hear His words. The wide beach afforded room for the multitudes who thronged to listen, and the busy life of the shore suggested the images of such parables as The Sower, The Tares, The Mustard Tree, and The Draw-net.

All this has changed. Of the ten cities which once existed within the deep basin, Tiberius is the only one left. We do not know that Jesus ever visited this town. He twice refused to go thither when requested by the builder, Herod Antipas, who was living in terror of the ghost of John the Baptist. The fame of Jesus had given Herod much alarm; hence he sent one of his officers of Capernaum to invite the new prophet to his court.

Tiberius is notable for its synagogues. These are in keeping with its Jewish traditions, for to this place the Sanhedrin was moved and the school of the Talmud established. It was here, too, that the Hebrew Bible, now universally accepted, was given its present form.

The city was built by Herod Antipas for his

capital. The construction was begun in the year 16 A. D. It surrounded the waters of a hot spring at the base of a steep hill, and was set upon the ruins of an ancient city and the graves of a forgotten race. The slopes were covered with temples and other public buildings, and in the centre of the city was a splendid structure, in imitation of the palaces of Rome, called the Golden House because of the sheet of lead upon its roof. It was because of Herod's bringing to his golden palace at Tiberius a woman to be his unlawful wife, that John the Baptist eventually perished, when "Herod lay hold on John and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife."

Ten miles north of Tiberius was Capernaum, a Roman military station. At the same time it must have been a recognized seat of the national religion. Scripture and fallen ruins tell us of a synagogue. The Capernaum Jews were proud of their sacred edifice, built by a Roman centurion. "He hath built us a synagogue," said they. Equal in dimensions to the Temple of Solomon, its colonnade and portico were of Grecian style, and the ruins of to-day remind the traveller of the fluted shafts and finished capitals of Ephesus and Athens. The structure stood upon high ground, with its pillared front and lofty steps facing the north. The whole upper portion of the building, ornamented with deeply carved flutings and flowers and acanthus leaves, rose above the surrounding houses of

the city, and would be clearly seen from every town and village on the shore of the lake. The Franciscans are now reconstructing this synagogue from its ruins.

The time that Jesus abode at Capernaum is divided into nine periods of sojourn in the city, and nine of missionary excursions through the neighbouring towns and districts. Four times we find Him teaching by the lakeside, three times in the synagogue, and once in some mountain near by. Each one of these three settings must have added to the sublimity of the spoken word.

Magdala, three miles from Tiberius, and from whence came Mary Magdalene, presents now an unattractive group of mud-brick Arab hovels. Chorazin, like Capernaum, takes us into the past only through what may have been its most impressive building, its synagogue. The ruins of this are easily recognized. The site is lonely and desolate, and the great roads which once passed it, carrying merchants and sailors, are obliterated. A sheep trail is the only path to the crest of the hill from which Chorazin looked across the historic scene. Certainly one hears again the words of Scripture, "Woe unto thee, Bethsaida and Chorazin." Of Bethsaida there is even less to be said than of Chorazin. Its very location is a subject of dispute. A village of black tents by the waters of the Jordan north of the lake mark the ground regarded by some as the spot where stood the doomed city of our Saviour's words, but this place

is more likely to be the location of Bethsaida Julius, developed by Philip the Tetrarch, than the intended destination of Jesus when He entered the ship on the eastern shore "to go over to the other side unto Bethsaida." Of this town not a stone is left to view.

One day in the story of the Master's work by the Sea of Galilee, hostility began to appear, and strange as it should be in that region, a crisis was threatened. At that time, instead of going southward from Bethsaida Julius beyond upper Jordan, He went northward, following a Roman road, parts of which still remain. Travelling past the waters of Merom, He trudged on to Cæsarea Philippi, making a day's journey of about twenty-five miles. It is difficult to conjecture why He resorted thither. We know Him to have been a lover of Nature, and it is possible that at this time of mental anxiety He sought the beauty of the region for its soothing and healing influence. Here at the base of Mount Hermon, the headwaters of the Jordan burst forth, soon becoming a swift current dashing over the rocks and gliding amid dense thickets of oleander and hawthorn. The landscape is probably the most charming in all Palestine.

Or it may have been that He turned to Cæsarea Philippi to escape the religious bitterness of the Jews. Here was no Judaism, but paganism in its two chief forms of the day, the one the worship of the Greek God Pan, to which the many excavated temples and the etymology of the present name

Banias, or Panias, point. The other was the worship of the Roman emperor for which a temple had been built by Herod the Great, and which was further embellished by Philip the Tetrarch, who renamed the city, calling it Cæsarea Philippi.

Whatever the occasion of this retreat, Jesus found relief in quiet conversation with His disciples, such as He could not enjoy along the busy lakeside. Here He heard Himself avowed the Christ, the Son of the Living God; and in return He opened His heart, telling them of the nature of His redemptive work, and speaking of "the decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem."

There is little left at Banias to suggest the city's ostentation of Christ's day. It is well worth the journey if but to stand and contemplate the miracle that has taken place since the event of His sojourn there—to recall the two religions of Pan and Cæsar-worship competing with each other for supremacy; and then to think of Him who once stood there as a Galilæan peasant, but who, following that first confession gathered to Himself all those ascriptions of Divinity that men can know; whose name is going on to capture the hearts and adoration of all races.

"Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore
Till moons shall wax to wane no more."

IX

FROM CARMEL TO JAFFA AND JERUSALEM

FOR most of us, the history of Carmel lies chiefly in the contest staged upon it by Elijah and Ahab, between two rival religions. The story in the Book of Kings is too vivid to need retelling here, but it is not without interest to know that the intense debate, whether Jehovah or Baal were supreme Lord of the elements, was fought out for a full day in face of one of the most sublime prospects of earth and sea and heaven. The view from the western promontory of Carmel was to me one of the most fascinating scenes of all Palestine. The sides of the mountain were covered with a variegated colouring of foliage; below were the deep blue waters of the bay; the sands sinking into the open sea; the white stretch running to Acre six miles away; the port of Haifa with its cupolas and minarets; the fertile lands of the thriving colonies.

Carmel runs inland from the sea eighteen miles, finally sinking into the wooded hills of Samaria. At the eastern edge is a series of rocky terraces. Not far from this a Catholic chapel and the remains of a Crusaders' castle stand in what is said to have been the place to which Elijah summoned

the idolatrous king Ahab. It is not difficult to accept the site as historic. Looking from here across the plain of Esdraelon sixteen miles to ancient Jezreel, there rises vividly within the imagination Ahab's royal and priestly attendants starting westward in response to the challenging words of God's prophet. Again the cortège can be seen turning about from Carmel as the cloud rises from the sea, and hastening to recross the valley homeward before the swelling of the Kishon River should make it impassable; while across the same plain Elijah outspeeds the group on foot, leaving behind the king's chariot dragging tediously its heavy mud-laden wheels.

There are other traditional Scripture landmarks on the mountain. One of these is a cave in which Elijah made his home. Here a Carmelite monastery now brings an atmosphere of mysticism to a spot associated with one of the most impetuous and ardent of men. The masonry of the cloister dates back to Pope Honorius. The main parts have been destroyed and rebuilt several times. Napoleon used the quarters as a hospital in 1799. In the centre of the present housing is a handsome chapel with a costly organ, an elaborate altar of onyx, and many fine paintings. Among the number of caves in the vicinity is one regarded as having been used by Obadiah when he hid the prophets of the Lord from the wicked Queen Jezebel.

Carmel is well-known for the philanthropic institutions grouped upon it. Added to this feature,

the number of villas rising from its wooded slopes show that men are taking advantage of its natural beauty and position, and are making it a place of homes. This is a development that would no doubt have happened long ago had it not been for the paralyzing oppression that has for so many centuries lain heavily upon the land.

In contrast to Carmel with its open solitudes, its natural recesses, there stood in Christ's day the artificial and opulent city of Cæsarea, a day's journey to the south. This city was begun in the year 24 B. C., the construction occupying twelve years. It was an attempt to create the finest work of Herod's reign. So near was it a model of the Græco-Roman civilization that it was surnamed by its contemporaries "Second Rome." Herod's original object in building this seaport and fort was to maintain a stronghold of naval power on the Mediterranean coast, thus making a connecting link in the two chains of naval stations to further insure the dominion of the Roman Empire in the East. The city at one time had a population of two hundred thousand people.

The Scripture associations of Cæsarea belong to the history of the early Church. There, through the family of Cornelius, the door of faith was first opened to the Gentiles by the ministry of the Apostle Peter. There also, probably about the same period, Paul found a temporary refuge when he was obliged to quit Jerusalem. At a later period

he was carried to Herod's city as a prisoner and detained in bonds for two whole years. Peter, when persecuted by Herod in Jerusalem, sought and found safety in Cæsarea. It was the residence for many years of Philip the evangelist; and occasional visits, besides those already mentioned, were made to it by Paul in the course of his missionary tours.

Cæsarea has gone the way of the majority of Palestine's ancient cities. Its glory is to be read only in its ruins. There are traces of a palace, a temple, a forum and lawcourts. On the ground lie squares of Egyptian red granite, two colossi, and four obelisks. Débris of arches outline a Hippodrome that seated an audience of twenty thousand people. On an elevation stood the theatre in which King Agrippa was said to have acted and to have died. A massive structure of block, particularly conspicuous, represents the famous harbour towers that have been described in Roman history. Harbour ruins run out into the sea, which dashes over the prostrate columns of huge masonry. Arches still remain of a double aqueduct, but they no longer serve the purpose for which they were built. Desolation reigns everywhere, showing how time laughs at the mightiest works of man, turning beauty to ashes and strength to destruction.

The plain of Sharon is crossed on the way from Cæsarea to Jaffa. The millions of flowers covering the undulations along the wayside remind us of the immortal association by Canticles of the plain of

Sharon and the rose. The northern section of this seaboard is still the shepherd's land, just as it was in the days when David set his herdsman " over the herds that fed in Sharon," or when Isaiah wrote "And Sharon shall be full of flocks." Over the south are orchards and groves, vineyards and gardens, a cultivation and fertility prophetic, the Zionists say, of what the whole plain shall eventually become.

Jaffa is probably best known to many individuals as the port from which Jonah set out on his celebrated sea-passage, a voyage of adventure that he surely never anticipated even in his moments of wildest imagination. The city, however, has known a long and checkered history. It has harboured the religions of Christianity, of Judaism, and of Islam, and has been included in the historic movements of Palestine, Arabia, Greece, Rome and Egypt. A manuscript discovered forty years ago records the capture of Jaffa by an Egyptian general under Pharaoh Thutmose III. The cedars of Lebanon which Solomon bought from the king of Tyre were floated down to this port, and on its rocks were landed later the gigantic gates of gilt bronze with which King Herod adorned the second temple. The house of Simon the tanner is traditionally represented, the abode of the Apostle Peter when he beheld the vision of the sheet filled with clean and unclean beasts. With equal assurance is pointed out the home where lived Tabitha, " a woman full of good works and almsdeeds which she did."

Jaffa to-day is a cosmopolitan centre, with a prevailingly Oriental atmosphere. Almost every type of Asiatic is represented. In the market-place one can see, from sunrise to sunset, a combination of features and colours forming with their setting as fascinating a picture as an artist can find anywhere in the East. Unfortunately, to offset this gaiety, one is conscious of a near-by conglomeration of camels, mules, goats, dogs, parrots, hens and geese, together emitting a babel of sounds anything but melodious. The inhabitants of Jaffa tell you that the town was so especially favoured as to escape the flood. Clearly enough there are many places in the city that do not appear ever to have been swept by either water or wind. A tourist reaching Jaffa by boat told me of his depression caused by the sight of the untidiness and squalor which he immediately encountered—a rather unwholesome impression of the Holy Land. I was glad to have come upon the port from the inland, because of the æsthetic value of this introduction. By doing so, one can appreciate the origin of its name, which means "The Beautiful." The approach is along an avenue of gardens, whose list of fruits outnumbers that of the Bible. The city is on a rounded elevation. It is as if the plain, hearing the whisperings of the sea, had raised itself here upon its elbow to look abroad, and held by the scene, had so preferred to remain. From its exalted position I looked away from the gardens to the blue waters of the Mediterranean. The vast

stretch of the sea was lying in undisturbed repose, with here and there a whitecap rising in the distance, or some wave breaking into spray on the outlying rocks. The sky was cloudless, its deep shading rivalling the wealth of colour glistening on the surface of the waters below. On the horizon, vessels could be faintly seen, messengers from an unseen world. I wondered if Peter had not looked upon something like this, previous to his dream which told him of the vastness and significance of the world that surrounded the narrow limits of his own land and people, the dream that led him to say: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10: 34).

The country south of Jaffa abounds in vineyards, orange and almond groves, the work not of the later colonists, but of pioneers who settled there nearly half a century ago. Three of these colonies alone, Rishon-le-Zion and New Zion, founded in 1882, and Reckovoth, founded in 1900, have ten thousand acres devoted to horticulture. The response of the soil to cultivation has covered the area with beauty, and in addition to the economic and æsthetic returns which it has given, it is a corroboration of the Scripture testimony to the fertility of this lower plain.

The barrenness of the elevations rising to the west is made up in interest by the association of

the ground with varied episodes of bygone days. Lying directly between Jaffa and Jerusalem are two towns, Lud and Ramleh, and two localities, the valleys of Ajalon and Sorek, which maintain a permanent place in history and tradition. The towns are fifteen and twenty miles respectively from Jaffa. The valleys run up from the rich lands of the older colonies, and penetrate the highlands eastward toward Jerusalem. Lud, once Lydda, was visited by the Apostle Peter in the course of his evangelical labours. Here he restored to health Æneas, who had kept his bed for eight years " sick of the palsy." A building of a later day within the town further shows Lud to have participated in the early life of Christianity. This structure is the Cathedral of St. George, named after the patron saint of England and Russia, said to have been born and buried here. A Roman soldier of noble birth, St. George, after his conversion to Christianity, became a lay teacher, finally suffering a martyr's death during the persecutions of Emperor Diocletian. Ramleh, in its relation to Scripture, is a traditional landmark only, being regarded as the home of Joseph of Arimathæa, who gave the Saviour's body a sepulchre within his tomb. A tower of unknown origin, one hundred and twenty feet high, rises from the centre of the town, built, according to Christian tradition, to commemorate the death of forty Christian martyrs. The valleys of Ajalon and Sorek are both prominent Bible landmarks. It was down the valley of Ajalon that

Joshua drove the five kings from Gibeon, at the same time calling upon the sun and moon to stand still. Sorek gave us the life and associations of Samson. Neither of these uneven and rugged areas have been much affected by the modern economic developments of Palestine. Running through the valley of Ajalon is a metalled highway, along which are the recent settlements of Kiryat-Manivim and Moza; and Sorek has the Jaffa to Jerusalem railroad, with also two or three colonization developments; but other than these innovations and the destructive work of time, there is little to hamper the imagination in visualizing the life that once moved along these hills.

Approaching the valley of Ajalon from Ramleh, we see the Arab village of El-Gabab, the new settlement of Gezer established by the Maccabeans of London, and five miles from Ramleh the ancient site of the Biblical Gezer. The first two exist for us only as expressions of the changes transpiring in the land; the last, the site of Gezer, remains as one of the most significant landmarks of Old Testament times. To quote Smith's "Geographical History of Palestine": "Few of the travellers who now rush across the plain realize that the first conspicuous hill they pass in Palestine is one of the most thickly haunted, even in that narrow land into which history has so crowded itself. Within sight of every Egyptian and every Assyrian invasion of the land, Gezer has also seen Alexander pass by, and the legions of Rome in unusual flight; and the

armies of the Cross struggle, waver and give way, and Napoleon come and go. If all could rise who have fallen around its base, Ethiopians, Hebrews, Assyrians, Arabs, Turks, Greeks, Romans, Celts, Saxons, Mongols, what a rehearsal of the Judgment Day it would be! "

The Scripture associations of Gezer belong chiefly to the days of Joshua, of David and of Solomon. The king of Gezer was one of the unfortunate victims of Joshua's fierce onslaught at Gibeon. Gezer was the ground that witnessed the final defeat of the Philistines when David's men smote them " unto Gezer." Later, it was taken by the king of Egypt who gave it as a dowry to his daughter when she married Solomon: " For Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up, and taken Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and slain the Canaanites that dwelt in the city, and given it for a present unto his daughter, Solomon's wife " (1 Kings 9: 16). Solomon repaired and fully fortified the city.

It is chiefly from its excavations that we gather the romantic story of this place. Evidences are found of a low type of Neolithic man who did not even use metal. There are traces of a less primitive civilization in which rude trades were carried on, the craftsmen making attempted imitations of foreign models. Egyptian civilization of the period of Thutmose III is clearly defined, including a model of the Queen of Heaven, a religious symbol of the country. Two tablets of Assyrian origin

indicate that the place was garrisoned by Eastern troops during the period of the exile.

The town Ajalon that gave the name to the valley lay eight miles to the east. It is represented by the modern village of Yalo. Ajalon was allotted by Joshua to the Danites, but this tribe was not able at the time to oust the sturdy Amorites from their possession. The town evidently was never destined to be a constituent part of the Israelitish nation, for while Rehoboam in his day claimed and fortified it, the last record we have of Ajalon is of its invasion and conquest by the Philistines, when "the Lord brought Judah low because of Ahaz king of Israel" (2 Chron. 28: 19).

These mountains and valleys were the scene of many a fierce onslaught during the days of a later and more bitter conflict than any of the Jews had hitherto known, the days of the Maccabean stroke for freedom. Three miles southwest of Ajalon is Latron, supposedly Modin of the Apocrypha, where Antiochus Epiphanes in his oppression of Palestine commanded the Jews to worship at an idol altar. If the traditional ground be authentic, here would be the very starting-point of the Maccabean struggle, for it was upon acquiescing idolators that the revolting Mattathias and his five sons swept down, precipitating a series of battles that secured a short period of Jewish freedom, but did this at the cost of much blood.

In contrast to the repeated association of Ajalon's warfare there is one little area among these

undulations of Judah which brings us to a new and refreshing atmosphere. In a sweetly embowered corner on the side of a hill lies Ain-Karin. Here is the revered birthplace of a prophet, the one of whom the Master said, "There hath not risen a greater." Somewhere in this quiet vale the Magnificat was first uttered. There is a spring near Ain-Karin which is called the Virgin's Fountain, and we are led to recall the words of Luke: "And Mary rose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda, and entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. . . . And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house" (1: 39, 56).

We do not trouble here about definiteness of location. One thing is true; diverted by these reflections from our contemplations of the animosities of men, our minds are brought once more to a consciousness and appreciation of the gentler and kindlier elements within the race, a consciousness that is deepened as we lift our eyes beyond the hills to Jerusalem, the mystic city four miles distant, where the promised Saviour taught and died.

The Sorek valley, running parallel with Ajalon, contains a number of noteworthy points. Among them are Timnah, Sorek, Beth-Shemesh, and Kirjath-jearim. Timnah, lying at the curve where the railroad from Jaffa turns eastward, was the home of Samson's Philistine wife. Samson was on his way here when he killed the lion, the incident that

suggested to the strong man his famous riddle of meat and sweetness. Timnah is twenty-four miles from Askalon, the place where the irate Israelite avenged himself by killing thirty Philistines and taking their clothing to pay their brethren the men of Timnah a bet they had won.

Samson's parents lived in Zorek, now called Surar, four miles east of Timnah. In this vicinity the prophet first gave indications of his great mission to liberate Israel from the yoke of the Philistine. "And the spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol" (Judges 13: 25). Samson's body was buried in Zorek. The place is one mile north of Deirborn railway station.

Beth-Shemesh and Kirjath-jearim, places frequently mentioned in Scripture, were situated near Zorek. In the vicinity of these two towns there occurred one day an event which would have puzzled an uninformed onlooker, when a team of aimless bovine travellers meandered over the ground, dragging a cart. The affair was in connection with an attempt by the Philistines to relieve themselves of the ark of the Lord. These people had taken the ark from the Israelites in battle, but soon came to regard themselves as being cursed by its presence. They then decided to give this sacred shrine of the Jews a unique and speedy dispatch. The unlawful possessors did not care where it might go, so long as they themselves were rid of it. The ark was placed in a driverless ox-cart, and the lowing team

started off to drag it in whatever direction they might chance to take. " They laid the ark of the Lord upon the cart . . . and the kine took the straight way to the way of Beth-Shemesh, and went along the highway, lowing as they went, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left; and the lords of the Philistines went after them . . . And they of Beth-Shemesh were reaping their wheat harvest in the valley: and they lifted up their eyes and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see it " (1 Sam. 6: 11–13).

The ark was allowed only a brief stay at Beth-Shemesh, being thence removed to Kirjath-jearim, now Khan Erma, which is four miles along the valley. The people who had taken the sacred symbol from the Philistine's cart had been too curious about its contents, and had " looked into the ark of the Lord." Following this a plague had broken out among them, and they called to Kirjath-jearim to oblige them by in turn relieving them of the mysterious charge. " Come ye down and fetch it up to you," was their invocation. The expression fits the topography of the place, for Kirjath-jearim stood on an elevation, making it a thousand feet higher than the position of Beth-Shemesh.

Within this area Amaziah the eighth king of Judah fought a losing battle when in his foolish arrogance he challenged Joash king of Israel to a fray. Amaziah had just taken Petra, the capital of the Edomites, renaming it " God-Subdued." His success caused him to presume too far, for at Beth-

Shemesh Joash made him a prisoner and returned him to Jerusalem in chains.

Beth-Shemesh is known to-day as Ain-Shemesh. Excavations show it to have been an important town.

There is in the Valley of Sorek a site which has no Scripture reference, but which has a never to be forgotten place in Jewish history. This is Bittir, once Bethor, ten miles from Jerusalem. It was the fortress that witnessed the fall of all Jewish hopes for freedom. In 133 A. D. the Jews, embittered by the insults of the Roman Emperor Hadrian, revolted; and taking refuge here they held out against their oppressor for three years. This was the nation's last stand. It is supposed that they were betrayed into the enemy's hands by a Samaritan. History says that over half a million Jews were massacred and that the valley ran blood to the sea. The Jewish power was completely broken.

Seven miles from Bittir and we emerge from the valleys. We have reached the city upon the hills, the city to which the roads of three religions lead, the city of Islam—the city of the Jew—the Christians' city—the Holy City—Jerusalem.

X

THE HOLY CITY

JERUSALEM, the most widely associated of all Bible landmarks, gives us no record of its founding, but archeologists profess that we may safely regard it as having existed for more than four thousand years. Pottery has been discovered which, by comparison with Egyptian ware, has been definitely recognized as identical with that of the first Egyptian dynasty of 3400 B. C.

There are three distinct Biblical epochs of Jerusalem's history:

The first, during which the name of the city was Salem, or Uru-Salem. It was the royal home of Melchizedeck. Reference to this "City of Peace," as the name signifies, is found in the Egyptian Tel-el-Amarna tablets of 1400 B. C. Uru-Salem is there recorded among the conquests of Rameses II in Canaan.

The second period, the Israelitish, commenced about one hundred and sixty years after the date of the Tel-el-Amarna inscriptions. The Hebrew invaders found the noted stronghold in the hands of the Jebusites, and known at the time as Jebus. The men of Judah captured the lower division of the city, but they could not drive out the defenders from the upper and better section.

The third period was ushered in when King David took the complete fortification by assault, and made it the capital of his kingdom. Zion now became the adopted name and Zion it has remained, even unto this day.

We look to-day on a city "builded upon its own ruins," graphically fulfilling the words of the prophet Jeremiah (30: 18). Below its houses, courts and paved streets lie the rubbish and wreckage of not less than eight fortresses which have risen in successive ages, and are now piled one above the other. Someone or other has written: "If we examine it, we have to determine at each step, among the ruins of which day we are standing—that of Solomon, Nehemiah, Herod, Hadrian, Constantine, Omar, Godfrey, Saladin or Suleiman, each in turn representing a city."

Modern Jerusalem presents the form of a square. It is bounded on the west by the valley of Hinnom, on the east by the Kidron Valley, on the south by the convergent lines of these two depressions. The north has no natural boundary, but has been protected by a triple wall, the two more recent fortifications having been added as extension was pushed northward. Running through the city is the Tyropœon Valley, which joins the Kidron and Hinnom at their confluence on the south. The metropolis is divided into four quarters. The northeast, called Bezethea, is the Moslem quarter; the northwest, called Acra, is Christian; the southeast, Mount Moriah, on which stood Solomon's Temple, is Jew-

ish; the southwest, known as Zion, is the Armenian quarter.

In spite of the devastations of time, the Holy City and its environs have retained many Scriptural landmarks. Some of these have escaped the desolations of sand and débris, and are, as they have been throughout the ages, definitely outlined upon the land's surface. Among such are the Temple site, parts of David's Tower, Antonia's Tower, and probably Skull Hill. Other data less fortunate but equally trustworthy, have been at some time inundated, and for centuries left entombed to await the day of exploration. These include parts of Herod's masonry, the Pool of Bethesda, the Siloam aqueducts, and many other vestiges of Old Testament times. Added to the historic and authentic testimonies to the Biblical records are also numerous traditional sites which, while their claims may not be validly substantiated, they cause at least the events with which they are associated to relive in our minds.

The ancient Temple site corresponds with the area now occupied by the Mosque of Omar. The most significant Scriptural association in evidence here is a large rock breaking through the tessellated pavement of the mosque and now surrounded by twelve gorgeous pillars and a gilded iron railing. The grey protrusion, fifty-six feet long by forty-two feet wide, is the naked top of Mount Moriah. Once it was the most sacred altar of the children

of Israel. It is believed that here was the painful halting-place of Abraham, when he laid the wood in order and bound Isaac his son. To David's lifted eyes it was over this rock, the threshing-floor of Ornan, that "the angel of the Lord stood between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem" (1 Chron. 21: 16). "So David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight. And David built there an altar unto the Lord" (25–26). Around this stone Solomon built his temple in 1005 B. C., bringing to the ground a mass of wealth that has never been computed in modern terms.

Succeeding this rose Zerubbabel's Temple on the same ground in 520 B. C., Solomon's structure having been demolished by Nebuchadnezzar when this Babylonian king destroyed the capital. Then in the year 9 B. C., one thousand years after Solomon's time, an almost new building of white stone and marble surrounded the noted rock and sacrifices and a lavish feast proclaimed the completion of Herod's Temple. This was the sacred edifice of Christ's day, replacing that of Zerubbabel which had fallen into disrepair. Herod's monument perished with the fall of Jerusalem in the year 70 A. D., when the Roman invader Titus, sleeping in Antonia's Tower near by, was awakened to see the nation's noblest building a mass of flame. In the second century Emperor Hadrian, desiring to overthrow the worship of Jehovah on its most hallowed

spot, built over the scarred and buried foundations of three temples a pagan shrine, and dedicated therein two statues, one to himself and one to Jupiter. But the days of heathenism in the land were past, and Hadrian's attempt was early doomed to leave the ground vacant through the silent centuries that awaited the coming of a religion hitherto foreign to the land.

The mosque of Omar was constructed by Caliph Omar, who took Jerusalem in 637 A. D. It is the finest architectural building within the city. The marble octagon and shapely dome that surround and shelter the sacred rock are regarded as equal in beauty and strength to any edifice in the East. The exterior is of blue and white porcelain, the interior mostly of fine marble. Within it we stand under a dome 170 feet in height, enamelled in exquisite tracery of brown and gold, its windows filled with stained glass of richest colours. The wainscotting is of vivid tiles, decorated with delicate arabesques, and over the floor are spread costly Persian rugs. The luxury of the mosque of Omar, contrasted with the poverty of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, stands out conspicuously to the discredit of the Christian shrine.

Near the mosque of Omar is the smaller mosque of El Aksa, standing where once shone the palace of Solomon, along the porch of which the Saviour walked. Here too, was probably the court from which He drove the unscrupulous money-changers, whose proximity to holy ground had repeatedly de-

filed His Father's House. Beneath the mosque of El Aksa are some stupendous vaults with a forest of pillars. The vaults are called Solomon's stables. Archeologists say they may have been used for the horses of Israel's ostentatious monarch, although their present form dates only from the Crusaders' invasion of the East. Rings are still to be seen to which the steeds of these religious fanatics were tethered, while the heartless cavalrymen sallied forth to seek vengeance upon the infidels who had defiled the Holy Sepulchre.

Within this environment there lingers one signal ruin, standing as an unobtrusive testimony to a great past, namely, the Jewish Wailing Wall. It is the only part above ground of the wall that enclosed the Temple area of Herod's time. This piece of masonry, one hundred and fifty feet long by fifty-five feet high, borders the west side of the Haram. Here every Friday come mournful groups of the faithful to read and pray and bemoan the condition of their shrine, of their Holy City and of their scattered people. Visiting the place as I did at an opportune time, I could realize something of the emotional power of this memento. Venerable men gathered for the preparation of the Sabbath were reading aloud the Book of the Law. Women dressed in long robes were kissing the ancient masonry, and pushing tear-stained faces between the crevices of the huge stones. Some of the worshippers were convulsed with sobs as they poured out their bitter lamentation, their unsubdued cries

suggesting to me the wails of a hundred children lost in some dark forest, and unitedly calling for their parents. The scene was irresistibly affecting. Even my guide, a Christian Syrian, looked on seriously. "It is a pity," he remarked reflectively, "that they don't know any better. It is crying so that gives them their sore eyes." Among the repeated passages of reading rising in audibility above the others were: "For our majesty that is departed, we sit in solitude and mourn; for the precious stones that are burned we sit in solitude and mourn." "Haste, haste, Redeemer of Zion, speak to the heart of Jerusalem."

I asked a rabbi what the orthodox Jew expected to result from this ritual at the Wailing Wall?

"I suppose you mean in the way of prayer working miracles," he returned, "or of some miraculous demonstration. Well, to begin with, we know that the great institution of religion carries within itself marvelous potentialities, and that many of the things it has achieved, had they been precipitously effected, would have been regarded as happenings superseding natural law. Hence the unknown possibilities of this sustained religious fervour. Second, the ritual and custom in connection with the Wailing Wall is an integral part of Judaism, and one could not interfere with this one particular tradition without more or less influencing in a far-reaching way the whole phenomena of its spiritual life. It has the feature of a picture on canvas; some small character within the setting might to

the casual observer appear meaningless and unimportant, but to the eye of an artist it would have a part that could not be tampered with or erased without marring the total effect of the work."

Apart from all this, one impression lingers in the mind, a vague perception of a Divinity lamenting and hovering over the rows of silent stones; a feeling that these rough squares are more than mere expressions of inert matter; that they are, in spite of their desolation, symbols of a living and ardent hope; spiritual emblems made holy by the prayers of a great nation weeping over its fate; adumbrations sanctified by an innumerable host that have through the centuries risen to call them blessed.

The northwest corner of the Temple area is marked by a building long used as a Turkish barracks. The site boasts a military connection dating from the institution of the magistrate's palace mentioned in Nehemiah 7: 2: "Now it came to pass when the wall was built . . . I gave Hananiah, the ruler of the palace, charge over Jerusalem." A citadel was maintained on the ground throughout the centuries as the chief defense of the Temple on the side of its greatest exposure, the towers of the structure rising to a striking height and overlooking the Temple courts. Herod found this fort the last place to be reckoned with in his struggle for the Tetrarchy of Judæa. Approaching the eminence, he beheld its walls bristling with spears, while arrows rained down upon him from the elevated turrets. The per-

sistent but ill-fated supporters of his opponent Antigonus, had made here their final stand. After its capture the new ruler, regarding the tower as of strategic importance, rebuilt it and connected it by a secret passage with the Temple cloister. It may have been by one of these subways that the chief captain and his soldiers stole secretly to the castle, escorting Paul whom they had rescued from a violent mob. At any rate, it was from the tower steps that the famous apostle made his defense recorded in Acts 22, the oration which ended in his being smuggled by night out of the city and transported to Cæsarea. From this courthouse, in all probability, Jesus was led away by a band of Roman soldiers to the place of Crucifixion. The name "Antonia's Tower" was given to the fortification by Herod, in honour of his friend and patron, Antony.

On the west side of the city near the Jaffa Gate is another ancient tower, one which occupies a place in history both authentic and traditional. It bears the name of Israel's noted king, but it cannot be regarded as being the actual eminence from which David looked down apprehensively upon Absalom's rebellious army, or from which he gazed wistfully toward the peaceful hills of his boyhood home as he cried: "Oh, that I had wings like a dove, for then I would fly away and be at rest." It is evident that the structure existed in New Testament times. Its foundation stones are of Herod's architecture, and history records it as one

of the three towers that resisted the assaults of Titus. During the Turkish administration, the walls of this fortress resounded with the giving and answering of military commands, the government using it as they did Antonia's Tower, for a barracks. To-day this is changed. The British have transformed the edifice into a museum, and tourists may be seen moving quietly about its floors, examining curios and antiques that have been placed on exhibit from a long oblivion.

The appreciation of David's Tower as a historic figure was seen in the act of the British Government in January, 1929, when it appropriated thirty thousand dollars for the repair of the damage done to the building by the earthquake of 1927.

In the middle of a prominent projection in the eastern wall of the city may be seen an outline of two arches filled in by masonry, denoting the location of the Golden Gate. The elements of philanthropy, glamour and superstition have in turn contributed to the fame of this closed portal. Here, it is supposed, turned the gilded gates of Solomon, adding to the brilliance of the Temple Hill, and making more vivid to the tribes of the East the wealth of David's powerful son. St. Peter walked one day through this passage when a crippled beggar reaching out gaunt hands for alms, gained a response not in silver or gold, but in words that were to him the power of a new life: " Such as I have I give unto thee; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk " (Acts 3: 6). This

gate was closed by the Moslems because of a fear of the return of Jesus to Jerusalem. This second advent they thought would threaten the rule of Mohammed, and since it was regarded that our Saviour had made His triumphal march into the Holy City by this gate, it seemed likely that He would on the final Day duplicate the route. The name, " Beautiful Gate " used in the New Testament, is one of the many that have been applied to this historic mark, signifying the ornamentation and symmetry once brought into being at this part of the wall.

The record of the building of Solomon's Temple tells us that there was " neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was building." The old theologians looked upon this silence as having some spiritual meaning. Others who disagreed with the theologians regarded it as a piece of oppression by Solomon who did not want a row near his palace. One solution offered made it to be a religious custom copied by the Jews or forced upon them. As against all this, a rediscovery of the last century seems to give us a simple explanation of the program. Beneath the city of Jerusalem was found a labyrinth of caverns which were clearly hewn-out quarries. Laid about were partially-squared blocks and massive columns in all stages of separation from the living rock. It is now concluded that the whole of the ancient stonework of the Holy City, including the three temples and the gigantic wall, came from this spot. A

peculiar feature which may have some bearing upon our Scripture passage is that the stone, when first torn from its bed-rock, is comparatively soft and easily wrought into shape. When brought to the surface it quickly becomes hard enough to receive a polish. Possibly, to save labour, the masonry was all dressed underground, each block made ready to lay before being brought to the Temple site. This could account for the silence of builders' tools. The caverns have received the name of Solomon's Quarries.

On the Kidron side of Jerusalem, not far from the city wall, there is one of those natural features that remain the same through the ages—a flowing well. Sometimes called Gihon, at other times En-Rogel, it is to-day known as the Virgin's Fountain. Many Biblical associations are connected with its history. The spring was no doubt one of the chief elements in deciding the location of the city, and being the source of its water-supply, it was a constant gathering-place of the people, witnessing many a stirring incident of their national life. Solomon, chosen by David as his successor, was hurriedly crowned here. Adonijah, David's eldest son, who had aspirations for the kingdom, had gathered the people together by the fountain, where he " slew sheep and oxen and fat cattle by the stone of Zoheleth, which is by En-Rogel, and called all his brethren the king's sons, and all the men of Judah the king's servants " (1 Kings 1: 9). This outburst of generosity was to ingratiate himself, in

preference to his brother, into the goodwill of the citizens. Thinking he had won the day, he was announcing himself as king when news of the conspiracy reached the ears of David. The agitated monarch hastily dispatched the order to his servants: " Cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon, and let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel, and blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save King Solomon " (vs. 33, 34). When the evening shadows fell and the curtain was lowered upon the Gihon drama, Solomon, and not Adonijah, was ruler of Israel.

Of recent excavations in Palestine none have been of greater historical value than those conducted in connection with the Virgin's Fountain. Previously ambiguous references to this region have through archeology been given an elaboration and illumination that make their reading appear more like romance than tabulations of historic details. Some of the Bible verses left without explanation until the work of the pick supplied it, were as follows:

"And David said on that day, Whosoever getteth up to the gutter and smiteth the Jebusites . . . he shall be chief and captain " (2 Sam. 5: 8).

"And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem, he took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains

which were without the city: and they did help him" (2 Chron. 32: 2, 3).

"This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David" (2 Chron. 32: 30).

The enigmatical terms in these quotations were "the gutter," "the upper watercourse of Gihon," and the bringing of the watercourse to the "west side of the city." In spite of past obscurity, nothing need be more clear than the light now thrown upon these passages. Excavations have been made revealing a seventy-foot channel leading from without to an artificial cistern within the city; an underground passage wholly suburban, coming to the surface at a distance of seventy-five feet north of the spring, and a subterranean aqueduct of 1750 feet, ending at the Pool of Siloam. Each of these courses, leading in their different directions, have their origin at the Virgin's Fountain. Without doubt the three Scripture references and these well-defined discoveries point to the same material.

The story of this group of phenomena commences with the origin and development of the "gutter" by the early inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Jebusites. Living in a day when military invasions and sieges were continually threatened, these people had evidently recognized the need of an urban water supply, and to prepare themselves for whatever contingency of warfare might occur, had conceived the plan of tapping the source of the

spring outside the wall and conducting the water by an underground passage to a hewn cistern within the city. The subterranean aqueduct, now easily traced, was clearly the gutter mentioned in 2 Samuel 5: 8, in which instance we see it so ironically perverted by David from its original purpose. This device that the Jebusites had planned for their security was the very one used by the aggressive king for their undoing. The Israelite, engaged in a campaign to move his capital from Hebron to the elevated and well-favoured Jebus, found the latter's walls too defiant for his assaults. But there was the waterway from Gihon leading within the bulwark! The water of the intermittent spring doubtless being low, the subway suggested to David a means by which a man could stealthily place himself within the fortress, securing there an advantage over the resisting and boasting inhabitants. It was for such a feat that a man was sought, and the reward offered of a generalship in the army.

The "gutter," although a remarkable piece of work, was never wholly adequate as a military stratagem. Lacking sufficient drop, the engineering did not provide for a complete drainage of the spring at the time of its rise, a circumstance much to the disadvantage of the city in the event of a siege. For while the aqueduct would on such occasion secure the beleaguered inhabitants against thirst, there would be at regular intervals, breaking from "the fountains which were without," a generous flow of water available for the besetting

army. This condition continued until Hezekiah's time, and might have been tolerated much longer but for the sudden ambitions of Sennacherib the Assyrian, who had designs upon Jerusalem. Hezekiah, made aware of a threatened invasion by Sennacherib, realized that in order to deal with such a power, Gihon must be turned altogether to the advantage of the citizens. It was then "he took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountain." In order to deplete the well entirely by pouring its full supply at all times within the fortification, an aqueduct of 1750 feet was run from the springhead to an artificial reservoir afterwards known as the Pool of Siloam, "on the west side of the city."

Exploration has restored for us this phenomenal undertaking, with also an actual written account of the work. The record, found on the wall of the tunnel, and now in the Imperial Museum at Constantinople, is said by authorities to represent the oldest inscription in the Hebrew language that we possess. The translation is as follows:

"1. (Behold) the excavation. Now this is the history of the excavation. While the excavators were still lifting up
2. the pick each toward his neighbour, and while there were yet three cubits to (excavate), there was heard the voice of one man
3. calling to his neighbour, for there was an excess (?) in the rock on the right hand (and on the left.) And after that on the day

4. of excavating, the excavators had struck pick against pick, over against one another
5. the waters flowed from the spring to the pool for a distance of 1200 cubits. And (part)
6. of a cubit was the height of the rock over the head of the excavators."

We gather from this tablet that the boring of the aqueduct was executed from both ends. There is a place about half-way in the long stretch, where irregular lines suggest the meeting-place of the men drilling from opposite points. The passage is very irregular, so much so that the course of 1750 feet would, if taken in a straight line, have extended a distance of only 1090 feet. The interior measurements vary widely, but they were apparently intended to be run on a scale of six feet in height by three and a half to four feet in width.

As we read in the Scripture references of the west side of the city, we should remember that here the term, representing the fortified area, stood for what is now only the southeastern quarter of Jerusalem. The description in 2 Chronicles, 32, corresponds exactly with the location of the Pool of Siloam as we find it to-day.

The excavated wall-channel running out northward from the Virgin's Fountain, answers to the "upper watercourse," the stopping of which was included in Hezekiah's program of defense. The original use of the channel may have been to serve in connection with the well as a storage system, retaining water from the overflow for days of

drought. A double wall has been found within the artifice, completely obstructing it at a point forty feet from the natural supply. The situation and description of this barricade support the conclusion that it was built to prevent the water from appearing at the orifice leading to the reservoir. This aperture and all other approaches to the fountain being sealed, the spring would be efficiently hidden from any foreign army gathered about the fortification's walls.

Following the slope from the Pool of Siloam to the broad valley below, we are reminded once more of the auspicious days of Solomon's reign. A large reservoir is outlined which this king built to irrigate the extensive area of cultivated gardens and orchards, planted to beautify and enrich his capital. The reservoir was fed from the Pool of Siloam by a conduit which is now easily traced. The vigorous prophet Isaiah, in one of his denunciatory moods, reproached the materialism of the people who made "a ditch between two walls for the water of the old pool" (Isa. 22: 11). The references were clearly to the unearthed reservoir and conduit. The channel suggests also the way by which King Zedekiah fled secretly from the city, absconding on a terrible night to escape the net of Nebuchadnezzar. "The city was broken up, and all the men of war fled by night, by the way of the gate between two walls, which is by the king's garden . . . and the king went the way toward the plain" (2 Kings 25: 4).

An unearthed stairway of thirty-two steps leading from Siloam toward the city revives within our imagination the stirring days of the returned exiles, when among the many renovations of their beloved capital they included the repairs of " the gate of the fountain " and " the wall of the pool of Siloam by the king's garden, and unto the stairs that go down from the city of David " (Neh. 3: 15).

Time has robbed Siloam of much of its Old Testament atmosphere. The pool is to-day malodorous and ill-kept, and Gihon below is constantly surrounded by Arab women who bring to it modern receptacles for their house supply of water. But in spite of these transformations, the ground is impressive. I left the hill Ophel with a feeling that the ancient Scripture was for me more than ever a living reality, that I had actually walked in company with towering historic figures.

Archeology has given publicity to a number of embellishments by which Herod sought to enhance the city of Jerusalem. This in turn means a glimpse of the capital as it appeared in our Saviour's time. For it was in Herod's Temple that Jesus, at the age of twelve, appeared and talked with the astounded doctors. Herod's Double Gate, with its lintels and columns still existing, is found to have led to a vaulted passage, running at right angles from the wall to the Temple platform. Here we have a genuine remnant of our Saviour's day, a way along which He must often have passed. On the Mount Moriah slope of the Tyropœon Valley

there is, thirty-nine feet from the southwest angle of the mosque wall, a projection of stones known as Robinson's Arch, so named because the famous American traveller, Dr. Robinson, first noticed its importance. These blocks, one of them weighing over ninety tons, are part of an arch, the piers of which rest on a pavement lying thirty feet below the ground. The arch clearly was part of a bridge that spanned the Tyropœon Valley between Mount Moriah and Mount Zion. It is likely that Titus stood on this bridge as he tried to persuade the Jews to surrender and thereby save their city; and the pavement long covered by débris and ruins was undoubtedly the one which knew the footsteps of our Lord. Wilson's Arch, another piece of masonry, and a closed portal which gave access to a vaulted passage, suggest, with other findings, that the provincial governor had a series of arches forming a viaduct between his gorgeous palace on the western hill, and the elaborate courts on Moriah.

The lingering fragments of Herod's work denote that his was a progressive reign, but the dignity and strength which he gave to the city was regrettably short-lived. The Infant whom he sought to destroy lived long enough to prophesy of the new temple that not one stone should be left upon another; and speedily Titus and Hadrian wrought that devastation which, together with the strokes of time, left only scattered mementoes of the affluence of the days of Herod. The one stone pre-

served from the Temple is in the Constantinople Museum. It is a square bearing an inscription, perhaps the only writing extant that Jesus ever read, forbidding on pain of death the entrance of a Gentile within the sacred courts.

The Pool of Bethesda, restored in 1888, does not appear to have changed much since its porches were the resort of " the multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water." The five arches are still there, and the difficult stairway leading down to the water's edge reminds one of the unfortunate invalid's complaint: " Sir, I have no man when the water is troubled to put me into the pool, but while I am coming another steppeth down before me." A series of tablets along the walls relate in forty-five languages the miracle of healing as told in the fifth chapter of John. In spite of the fraudulence practiced in connection with historic claims, there is nothing here to cause us to doubt the region of this rectangular pool near the Temple area as being genuinely historic—as being the original Bethesda pool.

Of the traditional sites within the Holy City the most famous is that of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. No other rood of ground, not even Mecca itself, has drawn together so many pilgrim bands from afar, or has cost so much in blood and treasure. Its recovery from the infidel was the dominant thought of Christian Europe for more than two centuries, and it is estimated that the

several crusades organized to accomplish this object cost from six to ten million lives.

The church is reached by the Via Dolorosa. Along this street are marked fourteen stations, each one supposedly representing an incident in connection with our Saviour's journey to the Cross. Within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre are thirty-seven stations at which worship is held, each one made sacred by some event of the Crucifixion and Burial. The chief of these shrines, the Holy Sepulchre itself, contains forty-three lamps of gold and silver which are kept constantly burning. A silver-lined cavity within the rock is revered as the place that held the Cross.

The claims for the authenticity of the present site of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, however, were never weaker than they are to-day. A growing opinion is deciding in favour of a spot known as Gordon's Tomb. This lies outside the city wall on Skull Hill, near the Damascus Gate. The elevation is an abrupt rocky cliff rising about sixty feet above the general level. On one side it traces the likeness of a human skull, which characteristic gives it its name. Such a location and topography correspond with the New Testament descriptions "without the gate" and "the place of a skull." History records that Hadrian, in the second century, built a heathen temple over the tomb of Jesus, and there has just recently been unearthed at a distance of thirty feet from the Skull Hill, a carved stone proven to be a shrine stone of a tem-

ple of Venus. A tomb also has been discovered here, answering to St. John's description: "In the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new sepulchre." It is rock-hewn, and has been at some time closed with a stone. Scattered about this tomb are other data which point to the presence at one time of a heathen adytum. Above the door are three small recesses, after a form commonly found in pagan sanctuaries. There are ruins of two arches, a part of a column, and a fragment of stone. The discovery outside the city wall is called Gordon's Tomb because General Gordon, the hero of Khartoum noted its Scriptural correspondence when visiting the place and published this in several magazine articles.

Tradition maintains that when Empress Helena the mother of Constantine built in the fourth century the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, she had identified the foundations of Hadrian's temple. The greater probability is that in selecting a site, the chief concern was to place the structure within the fortifications of the city rather than to locate the actual hill of Calvary.

There is something of incongruity about the fact that this Christian edifice should have been for so many centuries under the control of Mohammedanism; but the Moslems have at least exercised their authority with impartiality, having kept the ground open to all religious sects on equal terms. Thus it is that this church has been the only shrine

in any of the holy cities, to which the tribes and peoples of any faith might come, and without interruption offer their worship of prayer and praise.

The Tomb of David, marked by a small Turkish mosque, is given a location on the southern slope of Zion. Within this mosque is also a room regarded as that in which Jesus ate the Last Supper, and where He met His disciples as they sat in the "upper room" after His resurrection.

The Moslem in charge would not permit me to see David's Tomb, but I was shown a replica in a small adjoining recess. The actual tomb, we are told, is of rough stone covered with green satin tapestry embroidered with inscriptions from the Koran. Above it is a brilliantly coloured canopy, and by it two candles and a lamp are kept burning. The Room of the Last Supper is a low, heavily arched apartment, the floor covered with carpeting.

Peter on the day of Pentecost made reference to David's Tomb in the words: "His sepulchre is with us unto this day." But one might think that had the sarcophagus been so near the Room of the Last Supper as is now claimed, historic mention of this would be found. It is possible that some edifice on this site, being the only structure within the area after the fall of Jerusalem, was accepted as the centre of these recorded events in connection with our Lord's "tender, last farewell."

I found the Moslems apparently more reverent here than I had seen them at any other place. They supplied no slippers upon approaching the en-

trance, but demanded at once that I should take off my shoes. This was more than I had been asked to do in any mosque even in Cairo. In this latter city the guides simply obtained the large slippers provided by the custodian, and slid them indifferently over my shoes, thus manifesting a carefulness about the letter rather than the spirit of walking with unshod feet.

Jerusalem is to-day a cosmopolitan city. One expects naturally in this citadel of David to accost the Jew; but strange to say, no other than the student of Hebrew ethnology and anthropology could anticipate so many types of this race as Jerusalem presents. There is the Morocco Jew, the Persian Jew, the Kurdistan Jew, the Pekin Jew, and so on to every branch of the family that the dispersion has developed. Hebrews of every expression of their religious faith are here, and Hebrews of no faith at all. We may meet the conservative wearing his uncut forelocks, or the liberal to whom tradition and form have outlived their day; the devotee of mysticism, or the worshipper of a material social god; the Apocalyptic looking for a Messiah's coming and rule; or the commercialist whose hope of Jewish possession of the Holy Land lies in the efficacy only of hard cash. Such a diversity may be easily conceived, for of the 48,000 Jews who now reside in Jerusalem, the majority have assembled there as immigrants from other and varied lands.

Then there is the tenant of the centuries, the Arab. This son of Hagar, an irrepressible wanderer now numberless as the grey motes that people the sunbeam, has spread himself from his beginnings in the land of Shinar, over a distance greater than that reaching from the Atlantic to the Pacific. In Mohammed's sacred city he shadows us in all his idleness and glory.

Added to these is another and vast group of people whose interest in Jerusalem lies in its mystical significance. This centre has for ages been the shrine of the pilgrim. The Greek Church makes provision in Jerusalem for nine thousand of these at one time. The Russian branch of the church entertains every year more than fifty thousand of their own people. Other religious groups represented on the ground include followers of the Western churches, the sects of the Copts, the Maronites, the Abyssinians, and the Jacobites of the East. From this ascetic movement there is a constant contribution to the permanent population of the City of Peace. Out of the untold thousands thus moved by the deeper intuitions of the soul, there are always many who have gathered here for more than a transient call. Having bade farewell to their homes of other days, they wait on this ground, praying that when the last weariness shall have fallen upon them, and the kiss which comes as gently as the folding of a flower shall have pressed their eyelids down, that then the emblem of their earthly sojourn, "the earthly

house of this tabernacle," may find its last resting-place on the slopes of the sacred Olivet.

Truly in the people of Jerusalem, as one beholds them in their avocations, their traditions, their religion, it is to see at once the romance and the pathos, the hopes and fears, the emotions and the aspirations of the human race, not only of one but of every age. Yet with all this, the one ever-present contemplation as we walk its streets is, that here lies the city of the Holy Book, the landmark more than all others inseparable from its eventful past; and when John in his vision saw the "Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven," he assured us of the perpetuation of this name as a spiritual symbol until the end, when in the final cataclysm of worlds, the things of time and space shall be no more.

INDEX

Abarim Mountains, 37, 39.
Abraham's Oak, 19.
Abraham's Tomb, 19.
Adullam, 25.
Afule, 68.
Ai, 44, 46.
Aid-el-Ma, 25.
Ain-Harod, 68.
Ain-Karin, 98.
Ain-Sireh, 25, 26.
Ajalon, 97; valley, 44, 94, 95, 98.
Anata (Anathoth), 45.
Aphek, 73.
Apostle's Fountain, 36.
Armageddon, 62.

Baalbek, 26.
Banias, 86
Bashan, 80.
Beeroth, 46, 48.
Beersheba, 27–29.
Beit-Jaia, 14.
Beit-Sur, 26.
Bethany, 35.
Bethel (Luz), 48, 49.
Bethesda, Pool of, 104, 122.
Bethlehem, 14–16, 22.
Bethsaida, 84, 85.
Bethsaida Julius, 85.
Beth-shan (Beisan), 70, 71, 72.
Beth-Shemesh, 98, 99, 100, 101.
Bezah, 26.
Bireh, 46, 48.
Bittir, 101.

Cæsarea, 26, 89, 90, 110.
Cæsarea Philippi, 85, 86.
Cana, 78, 79.
Capernaum, 80, 82, 83, 84.
Carmel, 63, 73, 87, 88, 89.
Chephireh, 46.
Chorazin, 84.
Church of Ascension, 34.
Church of the Holy Sepulchre, 122, 123.
Church of the Nativity, 15.
Church of St. John the Baptist, 58.

Dahariyeh (Debir), 29.
Damascus, 82.
Damascus Gate, 123.
David's Tomb, 125.
David's Tower, 104, 110, 111.
Dead Sea, 37, 38.
Dothan (Tel-Dothan), 60–62.

Ebal, 54.
El-Gabab, 95.
El-Lejjun (Megiddo), 62.
Elisha's Fountain, 37.
En-Gammin (Jenin), 70.
En-Gedi, 11, 26.
En-Rogel, 113.
En-Shemesh, 36.
Ephesdammin, 14.
Ephrath, 22.
Esdraelon, 62–67, 70, 77.
Eshtaol, 99.

Fekua, 73.
Frank Mountain, 14.

Galilee, 44; hills of, 62, 63, 77; Sea of, 76, 80; road, 42, 50.
Gehenna, 21, 22.
Gennesaret, 81.
Gerizim, 53, 54.
Gethsemane, 33, 34.
Gezer, 96.
Gibeah, 14, 45, 47.
Gibeon, 44, 46, 47, 95.
Gideon's Fountain, 74.
Gihon, 113–117, 120.
Gilboa, 63, 64, 68, 70, 72, 73, 74, 75.
Gilgal (Gijuliah), 40.
Golden Gate, 111.
Gordon's Tomb, 123, 124.

Haifa, 87.
Hareth, forest of, 25.
Harosheth, 65.
Hattin, 79, 80.
Hebron, 14, 17, 18, 20, 21, 45.
Hermon, 80.
Hermon, Little, 63, 74.
Herod's Double Gate, 120.
Herod's Temple, 120.
Hinnom, 22, 103.

Inn of Good Samaritan, 36.

Jacob's Well, 50, 51.
Jaffa, 91, 92, 93, 94.
Jeba (Geba), 59.

INDEX

Jebus, 116.
Jehoshaphat, valley of, 31; tomb, 32.
Jericho, 31, 40, 41, 58.
Jerusalem, 13, 14, 31, 66, 102–128.
Jewish Wailing Wall, 107.
Jezreel, 73, 74, 88; plain of, 63.
Jordan, 62, 66, 70; plain, 37, 39, 41.
Joseph's Tomb, 23, 51; pit, 60.
Judah, 66.
Judea, Wilderness of, 11.
Juda, 98.

Keilah (Kila), 25.
Kirjath-jearim, 46, 100.
Kishon river, 64, 88.

Lazarus, tomb of, 35.
Latron, 97.
Lydda (Lud), 94.

Machærus, 37.
Machpelah, cave of, 17–19.
Magdala, 84.
Mamre, 18.
Mary's Well, 78.
Megiddo, 62, 63, 70, 72.
Merom, waters of, 85.
Michmash (Mukmas), 46, 47.
Mosque El-Aksa, 106.
Mosque of Omar, 104, 106.
Mount Moriah, 104, 121.
Mount of Precipitation, 78.
Mount of Temptation, 37, 41.
Mount Zion, 121.
Moza, 95.

Nablous, 52, 56.
Nain, 63, 74.
Nazareth, 68, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80.
Nebo, 37.
Neby Samwil, 44, 47.
Nob, 47.

Olivet, 34, 35.
Ophel, 120.

Padan, 22.
Peor, 37.
Petra, 100.
Pisgah, 37.
Pool of Siloam, 115, 119, 120.

Ramleh, 94, 95.
Robinson's Arch, 121.
Room of Last Supper, 125.

Saladin, plain of, 80.
Samaria, 50, 56, 58, 60, 61.
Sharon, plain of, 56, 90, 91.
Shechem, 49, 51, 52.
Shiloh, 49.
Shunem, 63, 72, 74, 75.
Skull Hill, 104, 123.
Solomon's Quarries, 113.
Solomon's Temple, 112.
Sorek, 98.
Sulem, 74.

Taanach, 64.
Tabor, 63, 64, 76, 81.
Tekoa, 15, 23, 24.
Tel-Adashim, 69.
Tiberius, 82, 83.
Timnah, 98, 99.
Tirzah (Teisasir), 50, 56, 59, 60.
Tower of Antonia, 104, 111.
Tyropœon Valley, 103, 120, 121.

Ur, 17.
Urtas, 24, 25.

Via Dolorosa, 123.
Virgin's Fountain, 98, 113.
Virgin's Tomb, 33.

Wady Suweinit, 46.
Wilson's Arch, 121.

Yalo, 97.

Zerim, 74.
Zerubbabel's Temple, 105.
Zion, 103.
Zoheleth, 113.
Zorah, 99.
Zorek (Surar), 99.

Printed in the United States of America

DATE DUE

MAY 15 '68

GAYLORD

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

DS107 .3.W13
Bible landmarks in a changing land,
Princeton Theological Seminary–Speer Library
1 1012 00022 8934